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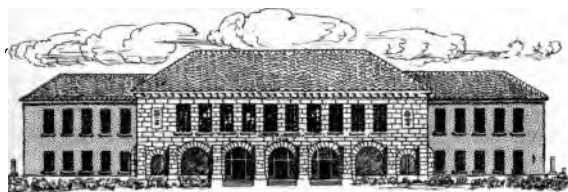


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JAPANESE FOLK STORIES AND FAIRY TALES



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JAPANESE FOLK STORIES

AND

FAIRY TALES

BY

MARY F. NIXON-ROULET

AUTHOR OF "WITH A PESSIMIST IN SPAIN," "OUR LITTLE SPANISH
COUSIN," "OUR LITTLE ALASKAN COUSIN," ETC., ETC.



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JAPANESE FOLK STORIES

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TO
DR. ALFRED DE ROULET

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THE CHOICE OF THE PRINCESS

A BEAUTIFUL princess lived in Inaba. She was called the Princess of Yakami, and was the loveliest princess in all the land. Her skin was like velvet, her hair was dark as night, and her eyes were as bright and soft as the stars. She was sweet as well as fair, but willful, and when they said, "Fair Princess, you must marry," she replied, "The time has not yet come. I see nowhere in Inaba the man who may be my lord."

At this the court was in despair. The Princess would not marry until she was quite ready,—that the counselors knew. They had not counseled the little, pretty, willful princess for nothing. Had the king, her father, lived it might have been different; but he was long since gone, and the queen mother could do no more with the princess than could the wise men of the kingdom. Early in her life the princess had learned that there was just one thing she could say which no one could answer. She had only to look very sweetly at whoever was trying to persuade her to do something, and then, with a dainty little smile, say simply, "But I don't want to!"

That was all. No one, not even the wisest of the counselors, had ever found an answer to that. It was a strange state of affairs; for all the little princesses before had been gentle and sweet, and had done just what they were told.

The counselors at length proclaimed that all young men of proper age and rank should present themselves for the princess to look at and see if she liked any of them well enough to marry.

The news of this quickly spread everywhere. It was no time at all before the road to Yakima was seen crowded with youths. There were youths tall and short, fat and thin, handsome and ugly, and each hoped he would be the favored suitor.

Among others there came eighty-one brothers, each of whom had seen the picture of the princess and wished to win her. These brothers were of noble family, but the youngest was the only one who was really noble. He was as brave as Yositumé! Eighty of the brothers were ugly and jealous of one another. It seemed as if they could agree upon nothing in all the world except treating the youngest meanly. They despised him because he was so good and gentle, and never rude or quarrelsome.

The eighty-first brother never complained. He tried to please his brothers; and when he found that

he could not, he stayed away from them as far as possible.

When, therefore, they went to wait on the princess, he lingered at the back of the train; for his brothers scoffed at him and made him carry their burdens, as if he had been a servant.

The eighty brothers went proudly ahead. As they toiled up a mountain-side they came upon a poor little hare stretched out upon the grass. All his fur had been pulled out and he was ill and wretched.

"Let me tell you what will cure you," said one of the brothers, with a wicked laugh to his companions. "Go down to the sea; bathe yourself in the salt water, and then run to the top of the hill. The Wind God of the hilltop will cure you, and your fur will grow again."

"Thank you, noble prince," said the hare; and as the eighty brothers turned away laughing, he hurried to the sea shore.

Alas! the salt water hurt his tender skin, and the sun and wind burned him so that he cried out with pain.

The eighty-first brother, trudging along with his brothers' bundles, heard the cry and hurried to see if some one was hurt.

"Poor little fellow!" he said, pityingly. "What is the matter?"

"Your voice is kind, your face is kind, and I feel that you have a kind heart," said the hare. "Perhaps you can help me if I tell you my story."

"I will gladly do so if I can," said the eighty-first brother.

"I was born in the Isle of Oki," said the hare. "When I grew up I longed to see the world, but I knew not how to reach the mainland. After a long time, however, I thought of a way. Great numbers of crocodiles were in the habit of coming to the beach to sun themselves. One day I said to them boastfully, 'There are more hares in Oki than crocodiles in the sea.'

" 'Not so,' said one of the crocodiles, 'there are a great many more crocodiles.'

" 'Let us count,' I answered, 'and then both will be satisfied. I can count all of you crocodiles very easily. You have only to form a line from here to Cape Kita, and let the nose of one be at the tail of another, and I will run lightly across on your backs and count as I go. Then we shall know how many crocodiles there are.'

" 'But how shall we know about the hares?' asked a crocodile.

" 'Oh, that we can decide later,' I answered.

"So they did as I had said. They formed in a line, and I ran across. Their broad backs made a good bridge, but, alas, why did I not know enough to hold



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“GO AND BATHE IN THE FRESH WATER OF THE RIVER”

my tongue? As I jumped from the last crocodile to the bank, I cried, 'I have fooled you well! I don't care how many crocodiles there are. I only used you as a bridge to reach the mainland.' But just as I said this, the last monster grabbed me with his teeth and tore off all my fur.

" 'You deserve to be killed,' he said. 'But I will let you go. In future do not try to deceive creatures bigger than yourself.' "

"Indeed, he was quite right," said the eighty-first brother. "You were well paid for being deceitful; but I am very sorry for you."

"Let me finish my story," said the hare, hanging his head at this rebuke. "As I lay here, smarting with pain, a train of princes passed by. One of them told me to bathe in the sea and run in the wind. I did so, and that is what put me in this painful state. Now what can I do, for I can hardly bear my suffering?"

"It must have been my eighty brothers whom you met," said the prince. "I must try to help you, since they have been so cruel. Go and bathe in the fresh water of the river. Then take pollen from the reeds and rub yourself with it. Your skin will heal, and your fur will grow again."

"Thank you, most noble prince," cried the hare. "You are as good as your eighty brothers are evil. You

will find that I am not ungrateful," and he hastened to the river.

Soon he felt quite well; and he hurried away, scarcely waiting to bid the prince good-by.

The eighty-first brother smiled to himself as he thought, "He is not so grateful as he pretended." Then he went on to the court.

The hare, however, was already there. He had heard the talk about the wedding of the princess, and he saw how he could serve the one who had been kind to him.

One of the hare's brothers was a handsome little fellow who had been given to the princess and who was a great favorite at the court. So the hare of Inaba hurried to this brother and told him his story.

"Now, to help my prince to wed your princess," he said. "Two such kind souls should dwell together and make the world happier."

"Trust me," said his brother, who had grown wise since he came to the palace and had learned court ways.

So when the eighty brothers presented themselves before the princess, dressed all in their finest array, she received them scornfully and sent them all away.

"Your faces smile," she said, "but your hearts are cruel, and I will have none of you."

But when the eighty-first brother presented himself before her golden throne, she stretched forth her hand

and said, "Good heart and true, I will share my throne with you and you alone!"

Then was the eighty-first brother glad; and all the people rejoiced and the little hare danced merrily on two legs and said, "You see now, dear Prince, that I am not ungrateful; for it is due to me that you are the Choice of the Princess."

THE MIRROR OF THE SUN GODDESS

MANY, many years ago, when the gods reigned in high heaven, the country of Nippon rose from the waters. Izanagi and Izananu, standing upon the floating bridge of heaven, thrust down a glittering blade. They probed the blue ocean and the drops from the sword's point hardened and became islands; and thus was created the "Land of Many Blades," the isles of Nippon.

Now Izanagi and Izananu were the highest of the gods of heaven, and they had two children, Amaterasu and Susanoo. Susanoo was made god of the sea, and his sister was the bright and beautiful sun goddess, whose name meant Great Goddess of the Shining Heaven.

She reigned happily from her bright golden throne for many years, but Susanoo, like many other brothers, was a tease, and he made his sister very angry with some of his tricks. She was quite patient with him, as elder sisters should be, but at last there came a time when she could no longer stand his naughty ways.

Amaterasu sent Susanoo one day upon an errand,

for she wished him to find a goddess named Uke-mochi, who lived in the reedy moors. When Susanoo found her he was tired and hungry, and so he asked her for food. Uke-mochi took food from her mouth to give him and this made him very angry. "Why feed me with foul things? You shall not live!" he cried; and, drawing his sword, he struck her dead.

When he went home and told Amaterasu what he had done, his sister was in a great rage and left her brother in total darkness. She fled to the cave of Ameno and closed the entrance with a huge rock. Then was all the earth dark, for the sun goddess no longer shed her light upon men. So terrible was it upon earth that at last the other gods met together near the cave, to consult and see what could be done.

They tried in every way to persuade Amaterasu to come forth, but she sulked like a naughty child and would not shine upon them. At last they thought of a plan to entice the goddess from her cavern by means of an image of herself. So a mirror was made, very large and fine. It was hung upon a tree, just before the door of the cave, and a strong hempen cord was put in the hands of a god who hid himself beside the door.

A number of cocks were started to crowing, and the lovely goddess Uzumé began to dance to music from a bamboo tube. The gods kept time by striking two



"UZUMÉ BEGAN TO DANCE"

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pieces of wood together, and one of them played a harp made by placing six of their bows together with the strings upward and drawing grass and rushes across them. Great bonfires were lighted, and a huge drum was brought for Uzumé to dance upon. This she did with so much spirit and grace that all the gods were delighted. They laughed with joy, clapped their hands, and fairly shook high heaven with their merriment.

Amaterasu heard the noise and could not understand it. She was annoyed because the gods seemed to be having such a good time without her. She had thought that they could not possibly get along unless she let the light of her face shine upon them. She was naturally very curious to find out what it was all about. So she pushed open the door of her cave, just a little bit, and peeped out. There, by the light of the bonfires she saw Uzumé's graceful dancing, and heard her sing,

“Hito futa miyo
Itsu muyu nana
Ya koko no tari.”¹

“Why does Uzumé dance and why do the gods laugh? I thought both heaven and earth would be sad without me,” said Amaterasu crossly.

¹ “Gods! behold the carven door,
Majesty appears! Rejoice!
Our hearts are fully satisfied!”

"Oh, no," laughed Uzumé. "We rejoice because we have here a deity who far surpasses you in beauty."

"Where?" demanded the sun goddess indignantly. "Let me see her!" and as she spoke she caught sight of her own reflection in the mirror.

She had never seen such a thing before and was greatly astonished. She stepped outside her cave to see more plainly this radiant rival, when lo! the god who was waiting, seized her and drew her forth, quickly passing the rope across the cave door to prevent her return. Thus was the sun goddess restored to earth.

THE SWORDED FALCON

IN the days of the Emperor Koan there lived near Koya a falcon which had wings and a tail of swords. It was far more dreaded than a porcupine of even the largest spines, and it used to lie in wait near the village of Koya to carry off people and eat them.

No one was safe from the ferocious bird. Little people, playing beneath the pines, happy in childish glee, were but tender morsels for the cruel bird. Women resting under the long racemes of the woodland wistaria, were attacked and dragged screaming to his nest. Even the men working in the rice fields would sometimes hear a cry of agony and see one of their number suddenly rise into the air in the clutches of the monstrous bird.

The villagers despaired of ever being able to rid themselves of this terrible creature. At last they sent a petition to the Mikado, urging him to send some one to deliver them from the pest.

"Behold!" they cried, "We, the subjects of Your Majesty, are in much fear and danger from this fierce

creature, and we beseech you to save us, your humble servants."

The Mikado sent to their aid the brave Prince Yashimasa; and the Prince tarried long in the village, for the bird was very wary and hid from sight. When the Prince went out to seek him, the falcon would disguise himself in various shapes. First, he would appear as a woman washing clothes beside the river; then he would become a tree growing beside a rippling waterfall; and again, he would look like a crane standing on the reedy shore.

It took so long to find the creature that Prince Yashimasa tarried for months in the house of Atago Shoji, a gentleman of the town. Thus it came about that he loved Atago's daughter, the fair and gentle Shiragika, and the maiden returned his love. The two walked happily together in the iris-bordered meadows, and chatted long and cheerfully in the shade of the bamboo trees.

One day Prince Yashimasa found the nest of the falcon upon a hilltop and he cried, "Aha! my fine fellow! At last I have you! Soon I shall destroy you, and the village will no longer be in dread, but will rejoice greatly."

He hid himself in a bamboo thicket, armed with his bow and arrows, and awaited the coming of the falcon.



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“HE SENT HIS ARROW THROUGH ITS CRUEL HEART”

At last it came, fierce and terrible. Its eyes gleamed like twin stars, its tail spread like forked lightning, its wings of gleaming steel beat the air like flames of fire!

"It is indeed the sworded falcon," said Yashimasa, and, aiming carefully, he sent his arrow through its cruel heart. The falcon dropped dead, and Yashimasa hurried to the village to tell the news.

Then all the people rejoiced, singing the victor's praises. "Hail to the noble prince!" they cried. "He has delivered us from the evil claws and the cruel beak of this demon-bird! Greatly will our lord the Mikado reward him."

But Shiragika wept and mourned, for now that her lover's task was done, she knew that he must return to his home. He must go alone, for it was not fitting that she, a simple village maiden, should go with him to the Emperor's court.

"Yashimasa," she wept. "Farewell forever. Forget me and be happy!"

"Never!" cried Yashimasa. "As soon as I have told the Mikado of the success of my mission I will return to find you. Never will I forget you," and he bade her a tender farewell.

She waited long and looked for his return, but he came not, for the Mikado sent him on other missions to far lands and he must obey. At last, with her kimono

sleeves loaded with stones, she dropped gently to sleep in the great river. And as she sank to rest, she sighed, "Yashimasa! In its death, the sworded falcon pierced my heart!"

When Yashimasa heard of her death, he mourned her truly; and when he grew old he returned to Koya and died beside the stream where she had perished.

THE PHANTOM CATS

A RUINED temple stood in a lonely wood. All about it was a trackless forest. The huge trees waved above it, the leaves in the thicket whispered about it, the sun goddess seldom shone upon it with her light.

Uguisu,¹ poet of the woods, sang in the plum tree near by. He sang the poet's song to the plum tree which he loved:

"Send forth your fragrance upon the eastern winds,
Oh flower of the plum tree,
Forget not the spring because of the absence of the
sun."

Ruined though the temple was, it still held a shrine and hither came Wakiki Mononofu, a young samurai.² He was a brave young soldier who was seeking his fortune in the wide, wide world. He had lost his way and wandered in the forest seeking the path, until at length he came to the little clear space where was the temple. A storm was coming up, and a palace could not have seemed more welcome to the young warrior.

¹ The nightingale.

² Japanese word for soldier.

"Here is all I want," he said to himself. "Here I shall have a shelter from the storm god's wrath, and a place to sleep and dream of glory and adventure. What more could be desired?"

Then he wrapped himself in his mantle, curled up in a corner of the sacred room, and soon fell asleep. But his slumber did not last long. His pleasant dreams were disturbed by horrid sounds, and waking, he sprang to his feet and looked out of the temple door.

There he saw a troop of monstrous cats which seemed in the weird moonlight like phantoms, marching across the clear space in front of the temple, and dancing a wild dance. As they danced they uttered horrid sounds, yells, and wicked laughs; and through these he could hear the words of a strange chant:

"Whisper not to Shippeitaro
That the Phantom Cats are near,
Whisper not to Shippeitaro
Lest he soon appear."

Wakiki crouched low behind the door; for, brave as he was, there was something so dreadful in the appearance of the creatures that he did not want them to see him. Soon, however, with a chorus of wild yells, they disappeared as quickly as they had come. Then Wakiki lay down and slept again, nor did he waken



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“A TROOP OF MONSTROUS CATS”

until the sun goddess peered into the temple and whispered to him that it was morning.

By the morning light it was easy to find the path which the night's shadows had hidden from him, and being very hungry he started out to seek some dwelling. The path led away from the temple, in an opposite direction to that from which he had come the night before. Soon, however, he came out of the forest and saw a little hamlet surrounded by green fields.

"How fortunate I am," he cried joyfully. "Here are houses, and so there must be people, and people must have something to eat. If they are kind they will share with me, and I am starving for a bowl of rice."

He hurried to the nearest cottage, but as he approached he heard sounds of bitter weeping. He went up to the door, and was met by a sweet young girl whose eyes were red with crying. She greeted him kindly, and he asked her for food.

"Enter and welcome," said she. "My parents are about to be served with breakfast. You shall join them, for no one must pass our door hungry."

Thanking her the young warrior went in and seated himself upon the floor. The parents of the young girl greeted him courteously. A small table was set before him, and on it was placed rice and tea. He ate heartily, and, when he had finished eating, rose to go.

"Thank you very many times for such a good meal, kind friends," he said.

"You have been welcome. Go in peace," said the master of the house.

"And may happiness be yours," returned the young Samurai.

"Happiness can never again be ours," said the old man, with a sad face, as his daughter left the room. Her mother followed her and from behind the paper partitions of the breakfast room, Wakiki could hear sounds as if she were trying to comfort the young girl.

"You are then in trouble?" he asked, not liking to be inquisitive, and yet wishing to show sympathy.

"Terrible trouble," said the father. "There is no help! Know, gentle Samurai, that there is within the forest a ruined temple. This shrine, once the home of sacred things, is now the abode of horrors too terrible for words. Each year a mountain spirit, a demon whom no one has ever seen, demands from us a victim, upon pain of destroying the whole village. The victim is placed in a cage and carried to the temple just at sunset. There she is left and no one knows what is her fate, for in the morning not a trace of her remains. It must always be the fairest maiden of the village who is offered up and this year, alas, it is my daughter's

turn;" and the old man buried his face in his hands and groaned.

"I should think this strange thing would make the young girls of your village far from vain and each would wish to be the ugliest," said the young warrior. "It is terrible indeed, but do not despair. I am sure I shall find a way to help you." He paused to think. "Tell me, who is Shippeitaro?" he asked suddenly, as he remembered the scene of the night before.

"Shippeitaro is a beautiful dog owned by our lord the prince," said the old man, wondering at the question.

"That will be just the thing," cried the Samurai. "Keep your daughter closely at home. Do not allow her out of your sight. Trust me and she shall be saved."

He hurried away, and having found the castle of the prince, he begged that just for one night Shippeitaro be lent to him.

"Upon condition that you bring him back to me safe and sound," said the prince.

"To-morrow he shall return in safety," the young warrior promised.

Taking Shippeitaro with him he returned to the village; and when evening came, he placed the dog in the cage which was to have carried the maiden.

"Take him to the ruined temple," he said to the bearers, and they obeyed.

When they reached the little shrine they placed the cage on the ground and ran away to the village as fast as their legs could carry them. The young warrior laughed softly, saying to himself, "For once fear is greater than curiosity."

He hid himself in the little temple as before, and so quiet was the spot that he could scarcely keep awake. Soon he was aroused, however, by the same weird chant he had heard the evening before. Through the darkness came the same troop of fearful phantom cats led by a fierce Tom cat, the largest he had ever seen. As they came, they chanted with unearthly screeches,

"Whisper not to Shippeitaro,
That the phantom cats are near,
Whisper not to Shippeitaro
Lest he soon appear."

The song was scarcely ended, when the great Tom cat caught sight of the cage and sprang upon it with a fierce yowl. With one sweep of his paw he tore open the lid, when instead of the dainty morsel he had expected, out leaped Shippeitaro! The noble dog sprang upon the beast and shook him as a cat shakes a rat, while the other beasts stood still in amazement. Draw-

ing his sword the young warrior dashed to Shippeitaro's aid and to such good purpose that in a few moments the phantom cats were no more.

"Brave dog!" cried Wakiki. "You have delivered a whole village by your courage! Let us return and tell the people what has happened, that all men may do you honor."

Patting the dog on the head he led him back to the village. There in terror the maiden awaited his return, but great was her joy when she heard of her deliverance.

"Oh, sir," she cried. "I can never thank you! I am the only child of my parents, and no one would have been left to care for them had I gone to be the monster's victim!"

"Do not thank me," said the young warrior. "I have done little. All the thanks of the village are due to the brave Shippeitaro. It was he who destroyed the phantom cats."

THE SWORD OF THE CLUSTERING CLOUDS OF HEAVEN

IN the olden days the gods dwelt by the isles of the Land of Many Blades, and there they used the swords, To-Nigiri and Ya-Nigiri. These were magic blades, but they were not so keen and terrible as the sword of the Clustering Clouds of Heaven.

And this is the story of that sword:

Amaterasu, the sun goddess, had a superb sword, whose flashing blade was like a gleam of light. This sword she greatly prized, but a malicious dragon stole it away and carried it to his den. The goddess cried for aid to Susanoo, her brother, and he pursued the dragon. It was a horrible beast with eight heads and terrible claws, and it roared at the god with each of its eight mouths.

Susanoo was a crafty and clever warrior and he knew that he could conquer the dragon only by guile. So he gave him soft words and smiles.

"What a wonderful warrior you would make, Sir Dragon," he said. "Had you but a sword you could conquer the world."

"I am not without a weapon and that a magic one," haughtily replied the great beast as he flapped his mighty tail. "Behold!" and as he spoke Susanoo saw that the magic sword was concealed beneath the dragon's tail.

"I drink to your health, O Wonderful One!" he cried. "May you live as long as there is no one mightier." And he offered him a huge draught of *saké*.¹

"That is wishing that I may live forever," said the dragon, and he drank off the *saké* at a single gulp.

"You have said it," said Susanoo with a deep reverence, and he offered him a second cup for his second head. By the time the dragon had taken eight cups, one for each of his great yawning mouths, his heads were so dizzy that he did not know at all what he was doing, and so he lay down to rest under the cliff.

Then Susanoo crept up and quickly struck off one of his heads and then another, and another until only one was left. By that time the dragon was quite wide-awake and very much enraged. He rushed at Susanoo and would have devoured him had not Amaterasu seen her brother's danger. She sent a gleam of dazzling sunlight into the dragon's eyes so that he could not see where he was going. Then Susanoo cut off the last head, and seizing the magic sword, bore it in triumph

¹ A Japanese liquor.

to his sister. She placed it in a shrine for safe-keeping and there it remained for many a day.

It was not to rest there always, however, for another hero was to wield it, and this was Yamato-Daké, son of the Emperor Koan.

A terrible war was being waged with the savages in the eastern part of Japan, and Yamato went forth to conquer them, bearing with him the Sacred Sword. But the savages were not easy to overcome. They laid in wait in the bamboo thickets and sent showers of poisoned arrows upon Yamato's men, who were sore afraid of them.

"A foe in the dark is as ten," they cried. "We are beset by the eight-headed dragon of Susanoo!" and all of Yamato's words of cheer and encouragement could scarce persuade them to go on to battle.

"How can we fight what we can not see?" they said.

The savages were well pleased and determined to destroy the whole army at once. They therefore placed a huge ring of brushwood around Yamato's army and, setting fire to it, they marched away.

But Yamato prayed to the gods, and, drawing his magic sword, he cut and hewed the grass in front of the fire until it drove back the flames. Then there came a wind from heaven which fanned the fire until



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“YAMATO WENT FORTH TO CONQUER THEM”

it swept back whence it had come and lo! it overtook the savages and burnt them until not one was left.

Then Yamato-Daké returned home with great rejoicing and all the people met him with shouts.

"Hail to the Chief of the Sword of the Clustering Clouds of Heaven," they cried. "For he has rescued us from the savages of the East."

And Yamato hung up the sword at the Holy Shrine of Atsuta, where it rests to this day; and the Mikado said, "Henceforth shall it be called the Grass Mower, and it shall be one of the three precious things of the Mikados."

But Yamato made answer, "As the deeds of the gods are greater than the deeds of men, call it not Grass Mower to honor Yamato, but still let it be known ever as the 'Sword of the Clustering Clouds of Heaven.' "

THE BOASTFUL BAMBOO

BENEATH the gleaming snows of Fuji lay a great forest. There many giant trees grew, the fir, the pine, the graceful bamboo, and the camellia trees. The balmy azaleas and the crinkled iris bloomed in the shade. The blue heavens were fleecy with snowy clouds, and gentle zephyrs caressed the blossoms and made them bow like worshipers before a shrine.

Side by side there grew two bamboo trees. One of these was tall, strong, and stately; and he reared his haughty head to heaven and bowed not to the North Wind as he passed. The other was a slender bamboo, so slight and delicate that it swayed with every breeze, and moaned with fright when a storm swept down the wrath of the mountain.

The children loved the graceful bamboo, and named her Silver Mist; but the big bamboo looked down upon her with scorn.

"You bend and bow to every breeze. Have you no pride? It is not fitting that a bamboo should show fear. I stand straight and strong and bow to no one," he said.

"You are going to be of some great use in the world,

I am sure," said the humble bamboo. "I am only fit to trim the houses for the New Year's feast. But you will become a beam in some great house or, maybe, even in a palace."

"Do not think I shall be only that," cried the boastful bamboo with a scornful laugh. "I am indeed intended for something great. I think I shall be chosen for the mast of a mighty ship. Then will the wings of the ship swell with the breeze, and it will fly over the ocean and I shall see strange lands and new peoples. All men will behold me and will say, 'See the stately bamboo which graces yonder junk!' As for you, poor timorous one, you are not even brave enough to deck the New Year's feast. You will be used to make mats for people to tread under foot."

The slim little bamboo did not answer back. She only bent her head and cried bitterly. The flowers felt sorry for her and breathed their soft perfume about her to comfort her.

As the days went by the slim bamboo grew prettier, and the children loved her more and more. They played beneath her waving branches, they made flower chains and garlands and hung them from her boughs.

"See," they cried in childish glee. "This is the Lady Silver Mist. Let us tie a flower *obi*¹ around her

¹ Sash.

slender waist;" and they bound a girdle of flowers about her.

One day there came woodmen to the forest, and they chopped down many of the trees, trampling the grass and the flowers under foot. When they saw the big bamboo they said, .

"Here is a tall, straight tree. It will do for a mast. We will cut it first."

"Good-by," said the boastful bamboo to the slender one. "I am going to see the world and do great things. Good-by, child, I hope you will not be used to make rain coats. When I am on the bright and beautiful sea I shall remember and pity you!"

"Good-by," sighed his little comrade. "Good fortune go with you."

The big bamboo was cut down, and the hillside saw him no more. When, however, the woodmen came to the little tree, they smiled to see it so beautifully garlanded with flowers and they said, "This little tree has friends."

Then the children took courage and ran to the woodcutters and cried, "Pray do not cut down our tree! In all the forest we love it best. It is the Lady Silver Mist and it has been our playmate for many moons."

"You must dig it up and bear it away if you wish to save its life," said the chief woodman. "We are sent


to this forest to clear it, so that a grand palace may be built upon the hillside where all is so fair and beautiful."

"Gladly will we root her up and take her to our home," answered the eldest child; and very carefully they dug her up, not destroying even a single root, for the woodman helped them, so kind was he and of a good heart.

They placed the slim bamboo in a lovely garden beside the sea, and she grew fair and stately and was happy. All around was calm and beautiful. The sea waves lapped the coral strand. By day, the sun shone on the tawny sands and turned them to gold; the sky was blue as a turquoise, and pearly clouds floated across it like shadowy angel's wings. By night the moon goddess rose in silvery beauty and bathed the garden in light; it kissed the leaves of the bamboo, until the dew sparkled upon them like diamonds in a setting of silver.

Fragrant flowers bloomed at the bamboo's feet: irises from their meadow home, azaleas, rare lotus lilies, and a fringe of purple wistaria wafting its breath in friendship upon her. Here she grew in strength and grace. All things were her friends, for she gave to all of her sweetness; and to the winds she bowed her head.

"Great North Wind," she said gently, "how thou art strong!" And to the South Wind she said, "How





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“THE GREAT BAMBOO, PROSTRATE UPON THE GROUND”

sweet and kind thou art!" To the flowers she gave shade and to the children, who still loved her, companionship.

One night she shivered and bowed her head very, very low, for there came a storm from the sea, a storm so fierce and wild as to frighten her very soul. The waves of the sea tossed the white foam heavenward; they rose up in giant walls of fury until ships sunk in the troughs between and were dashed to pieces. The beach was strewn with wrecks, and when daylight came, Lady Silver Mist gazed upon the scene. She recognized her old friend, the great bamboo, prostrate upon the ground, while all around him lay bits of the junk over which he had reared his haughty head.

"Alas! my poor friend!" she cried. "What a sad fate is yours! Would that I could aid you."

"No one can help me," he replied with a moan. "Would that I had been made into a common coolie pole with which to push a country junk! Then might I have been useful for many years! No, my heart is broken, Silver Mist. Farewell."

He gave a long shuddering sigh and spoke no more. Soon some men who came to clear up the wreckage, chopped the mast up for firewood; and that was the end of the boastful bamboo.

THE ANGEL'S ROBE

ONCE an angel bore to earth the soul of a child. She bore it to a little bamboo house beside a bamboo tree, and there it received a loving welcome. Many friends gathered around to greet the little newcomer as soon as they saw the kite¹ fly up from before the house. Dear little kimonos were given the baby. One was of the finest silk and embroidered with the crane and the pine; for these mean long life in Japan.

The angel loved the little child she had brought, and she tarried long at the window of the little bamboo house among the trees and flowers. She felt glad that she had brought the little one to such a happy home.

She had left her robe in the trees; for it had caught there in her flight, and she had not waited to remove it. A fisherman passing by, saw the beautiful, floating silk and, loosening it, he said, "This is a very pretty thing. I have never seen anything like it before. I shall take it to my sweetheart."

The angel heard him as she floated through the air,

¹ In Japan a kite is always sent up from a house where a little boy is born.

and she cried, "I pray you, sir, give me back my robe! I may not return to heaven without it!"

"Do not return, fair one," he replied, dazzled by her radiant beauty. "Stay here upon the earth and delight us all with your grace."

"Not so, not so," she cried in fear. "Know you not that an angel may not stay long on earth and live! Her beauty fades, her soul grows sick within her, and soon she is no more. Give me my robe and let me return, for I pine for the pearly gates and the golden streets."

"I will return it if you will dance for me," said the fisherman; and the angel consented.

"First give me my robe that my dance may be more perfect," she said.

"No, no, my beauty," he answered, "for then you will fly away and I shall never see you dance."

"Fie upon you, base mortal! Deceit was born of man; the heavens know it not!" she said in displeasure.

Then the fisherman was much ashamed and gave her the robe; and she danced for him a dance of wonderful grace and beauty, such as mortal had never dreamed of before. He wished to gaze forever at the lovely, floating being. The moonlight shone upon her, bathing her in silvery light, beneath the feathery bamboo,



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"SHE WAS WAFTED FROM HIS SIGHT"

with snow-capped Fuji above the clouds, calm and serene.

While she danced, visions of heaven came to the fisherman, and when she was wafted from his sight by a snowy cloud, he sank upon the ground and, covering his face with his hands, he wept bitterly, as he cried, "Alas! alas! Nevermore will things of earth seem fair!"

THE MOON AND THE CUCKOO

IN the far years of the twelfth century the Lord Mikado was cursed with a terrible illness. All Nippon prayed to the gods. Men offered all their richest offerings to appease the wrath of heaven, but it availed them naught. His Majesty grew worse and none of the great men who came to him could divine the cause of his trouble.

Every temple was full of devotees. Each shrine had its worshipers, but Sorrow was the guest at every door. His Majesty grew worse and worse, and every night was stricken with a horrible nightmare.

At last it was noticed that each evening a dark cloud moved across the heavens and hung over the palace. From it shone two fiery orbs, gleaming fiercely. The priests prayed and threatened, but the brooding demon remained. At last a young warrior whose name was Yorimasa came forward and said, "Let me slay this horrid beast who, with his black breath and fiery eyes, threatens the life of our beloved emperor. If I fail I can but die and my life is the Mikado's in any case. Let me go!"



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“FROM IT SHONE TWO FIERY ORBS, GLEAMING FIERCELY”

"Go, and the gods go with you!" the priests replied, and Yorimasa went forth to conquer or to die.

He breathed a prayer to the great god Hachiman, his patron, and set a heavy arrow in his well-strung bow. Twang, went the bow string, and lo! the arrow brought the monster low. It was indeed a fiend, terrible enough to have destroyed the emperor, for it had the head of a monkey, the claws of a tiger, the body of a lion, and the tail of a mighty serpent.

Yorimasa was brave, however, and he made at the beast with his good sword. Nine times he plunged it into the ferocious monster's breast, and at last it fell dead.

The emperor now promptly recovered, and wishing to reward Yorimasa for his bravery, he called him and said: "At the risk of your own life, you have saved that of your emperor. What will you have in reward?"

Yorimasa answered, "Most August One, my life was your own. Why should I not risk it to save that for which all Nippon would be honored to die? I claim no reward. In my heart is joy that I have served my emperor."

"But I will reward you," said the Mikado. "For I should be as just as you are generous. Here is the sword Shichi-no-O (the King of the Wild Boars) for since you can wield a sword so nobly, it is fitting that

you have a noble sword, my brave Yorimasa. Two things delight the heart of brave men, love and duty, woman and warfare. Since you have been successful with the one, I will give you success with the other. It has come to my ears that you love Ajama¹ and that she loves you. Take her and may you be happy and may your children live and prosper and grow up to serve their emperor as their father has served his."

Then Yorimasa bent low before him and thanked him; and a gentleman of the court composed a verse about Yorimasa, and sang a song to him in which he compared his rapid rise into favor to the cuckoo's flight toward the crescent moon. But Yorimasa was as modest as he was brave and would not admit that he deserved any special praise. So he answered the poet's song by singing these lines:

"Like the cuckoo
So high to soar
How is it so?
Only my bow I bent,
That only sent the shaft."

But he and Ajama were soon married, and lived happily ever after, in the sunshine of the Mikado's favor.

¹ Ajama, Flowering Sweet Flag. In Japan all women are named for flowers.

THE HANG-THE-MONEY-UP TREE

ONCE upon a time, nearly a thousand years ago, a man named Ononatakamura offended the Mikado and was sent into exile. His wife loved him dearly and wished to go with him, but, though she cried and begged to be allowed to do so, the Mikado would not permit her.

In her despair at being separated from her beloved husband, she made up her mind to go to the Sacred Shrine of Isé and pray for him. She stole quietly away to the foot of Mt. Hi-yei, but not being used to walking she soon grew weary and sat down to rest under a pine tree. It was a beautiful country that she looked upon. The hillside bloomed with flowers. The pines waved their green branches against the soft blue sky, and, serene and lofty, the mountains rose heavenward. A kind wind caressed her brow as she sat resting, and the murmur of the trees seemed to bring her comfort.

A farmer coming that way, she spoke to him saying, "Good day, kind sir. Pray tell me how far it is to the temple of Isé?"

"Twenty days' journey," he made answer, being a



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"I WILL HERE MAKE MY OFFERING"

rude fellow and unkind. He wished to annoy her, for he knew well it was not so far.

"Alas!" she sighed. "I shall never reach that sacred shrine! How then shall my dear husband be brought back to me! Surely the gods will hear the prayer of a faithful wife, no matter where she may be. I will here make my offering and my prayers, and the Eternal Kindness will hear."

Then she hung some coins upon a pine tree, and prayed earnestly that the gods would bless her husband and take her to him.

The farmer heard her, but his heart was still hard, and when she went aside to rest he tried to steal the money from the tree. But the gods had heard her prayer, and the tree suddenly turned into a two-headed serpent which spit fire at the thief's approach. The farmer was so terribly frightened, that he repented that he had been so unkind; and he took the woman by the hand and led her in safety to the shrine she sought.

Then were her prayers answered, for the gods softened the heart of the Mikado, and when one told him of the devotion of this good wife, he sent for her to come to his throne.

"So faithful a woman should have a reward," he said. "What will you that I bestow upon you?"

"The return of my husband, Most Revered One,"

she answered; and straightway he sent word to Ononatakamura to come back from exile.

Of the pine tree upon which the money had been hung they made a shrine. Whoever was ill of any complaint, and prayed there, was made well; and whoever besought there any favor of the gods was sure to receive it in abundance. And from that time the place was called the "Shrine of the Hang-the-Money-Up Tree."

THE GODDESS OF GREEN-GROWING THINGS

AMATERASU, the sun goddess, loved the earth. So long had she shone upon it with her gracious light that it was to her as a beloved child and she wished for it all good things. When she found growing from the body of Ukimochi, whom Susanoo had slain in wrath, a mulberry tree, and also a silkworm, rice grains, barley and beans she said to herself,

“Behold, the gods make good to grow out of evil. From death comes life. The slaying of Ukimochi was a deed of wrath, yet from it will come peace to the people of the earth.”

She made barley and beans the seeds of dry places, and rice the seeds of moor and fen. Mulberry trees she planted upon the hillsides, and upon these she reared silkworms so that the art of silk-weaving might begin.

Having thus given to the world things of such usefulness and beauty, the sun goddess desired to have them cared for. So she commanded Susanoo to send to earth his daughter, Mihashirano. He obeyed and the daughter came down from heaven. But she could

find no place to live, and therefore wandered for a long time to and fro in Nippon.

One day a fisherman named Sakino, who lived at Itsuku, one of the isles of the sea, was casting his nets near Okanoshima. As he fished he saw a curious boat with a bright red sail coming towards him. There seemed something strange about the boat; and Sakino waited until it sailed close to him. Then he beheld upon it the goddess Mihashirano, who spoke to him.

"Sakino," she said, "long have I passed to and fro in the Isles of Many Blades, and watched by field and moor and hillside to see the life-giving seeds which Amaterasu bestowed upon you. Well nourished have they been and watched so that you have had much rice and barley. Now, wherefore have I not a shrine built in my honor, where men may come to bring thanks, and where I may dwell in peace?"

"Go thou to the Mikado and request that he build for me a temple at Miyajima; then will I protect the Mikado's land forever and ever."

Sakino hastened to Kioto and revealed all this to the Mikado. At that time there was a great famine in the far provinces of Nippon, and the Mikado said, "The goddess is displeased with us, and so this famine has come upon my people. Hasten your return to



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"IT FLEW AHEAD OF SAKINO'S BOAT"

Itsuka and build there a temple to do her honor. Here is much treasure; go quickly and build."

Sakino was delighted with this task, and he hurried homeward as fast as he was able. He could not at first decide which would be the best place for the temple, so he sailed around the islands seeking the loveliest spot. Then as he sailed a strange thing chanced; for from the very top of the mountain flew a huge bird, and it flew ahead of Sakino's boat all the way. This he took as an omen, and he followed the bird closely until it stopped and hovered over a wooded hillside.

"Here we shall build the temple of Mihashirano-hime-o-kami, the gentle goddess of the earth's fruitfulness. We shall raise a temple to do her honor," he cried. "The torii shall rise up out of the sea; the light-bearing pillars shall guard the entrance, and men shall come from far and near to see the shrine. Then shall they see how the Goddess of Green-growing Things is honored in the Land of Many Blades."

This he did and the goddess dwelt happily in her abode, and there was no more famine in the land; for the shrine of the Goddess of Green-growing Things is to this very day honored in the isles of Nippon.

THE KNIGHTLY WASTE-PAPER MAN

I

THERE was once a young noble who was very poor. He was a Samurai who had offended his lord and so was obliged to leave his own province and travel in search of employment. It was very hard for him to find anything to do, for neither he nor his fair young wife had been taught to work.

"Alas! my bride! White as the lily art thou and tender as the carnation,—to what has thy love for me brought thee!" he cried.

But Tsuiu caressed him sweetly and said, "I am happy since my lord has taken me with him. The good-luck god will surely hear our prayers and we shall find a fortunate issue."

Then was the soul of Shindo lightened and he strode along the highway gladly, and Tsuiu walked beside him, and the breath of the morning was sweet and kind. They walked for many hours and found no rest; but the music of the grass-larks was sweet and the sun was bright.

But when the shadows began to fall, and the fire-flies to flit among the tall grasses, and the moon to creep slowly above the crest of the mountains, the little wife drew closer to Shindo San; for in her terror she saw robbers in every tree and bush.

"Be not afraid, my beloved," he said, as he drew her within his sheltering arms. "See! here is a pleasant knoll beneath this sendai tree. Wrap yourself in my mantle. Pillow your head upon my arm. Then may the god of dreams send you a good-luck dream and may your slumber be sweet. I will watch!"

"I will obey, my lord," said Tsuii. She closed her eyes, and, holding the left sleeve of her kimono across her face, she was soon fast asleep.

Shindo watched and waited, his hand upon his sword; but he too was weary, and soon his eyes closed and his head drooped. He slept and dreamed that two huge dragons came out of the West and sought to devour them; and lo! as he cried aloud in terror for the safety of Tsuii San, a greater Dragon came out of the East and devoured the first two, and he and his bride escaped.

Then he awoke suddenly and sprang to his feet, putting O Tsuii San behind him, for robbers were upon him, and there were two. He drew his sword and fought fiercely, but they well-nigh overpowered him. He felt

his strength fail. The blood was gushing from a wound in his arm. Suddenly there appeared upon the scene a ronin who quickly put to flight the robbers and saved the life of Shindo.

Then he and O Tsuiu San thanked the ronin very heartily, and finding the morning dawn at hand, and hearing the morning bell from a distant temple, they started on their way.

"Tell me first, whence you come and whither you go," said the ronin. "For I well see that you are of better times, and that misfortune has brought you here."

"We are in dire distress," said the Samurai, "and I have scarce a *yen*¹ to buy rice for the breakfast of my wife." Then he told all their story to the ronin, who, being of a good heart, was grieved at their sorrows.

"It is little that I can do for you myself," he said, "since I am but a wanderer with nothing in my sleeves. But come with me and I will set you in the way of making a good but simple friend. Yonder are the towers and temples of Yedo," and he pointed to the roofs of a city gleaming gold in the morning sun. "In a certain street lives a tradesman, a poor fellow, yet of a good heart. He bears the name of Chohachi. Seek him and tell him I commend you to his kindness. My road lies elsewhere. *Sayonara!*"²

¹ Japanese coin equivalent to our dollar.

² Good-by.

Bidding good-by to the ronin, the two hurried on and finding Chohachi, he took them in and made them welcome. There they remained several days until O Tsuiu San recovered from her fatigue, and Shindo from his wound. Then Chohachi spoke.

"Honored One," he said, "very welcome are you and yours to the shelter of our roof tree, but the rice pot holds not enough for four. Is there any way in which you are able to make the pot boil?"

"Good friend," replied Shindo, "in the house of my fathers the rice pot ever boiled without assistance from me. I know no way."

Chohachi knit his brows.

"Can the Honorable One teach the young men to fence?"

"Alas," cried Shindo. "I have little skill as a swordsman. I fear I know not enough to teach fencing."

"Can the Honorable One teach writing?" demanded Chohachi.

"Of that I know even less," replied his guest, so mournfully that Chohachi hastened to reassure him. "Some way shall be found to boil the pot even if we have to hunt the magic paddle of the Oni."

So the tradesman thought and thought.

"What can this dear fellow do?" he asked himself.

"It must be something of the easiest for he seems not to have much thought for trading. I have it! He shall be a waste-paper man! A boy or a simpleton could do that!"

So he purchased a light pole of bamboo with two baskets at the end, and a pair of bamboo sticks. He called the Samurai "Chobei," for Shindo was too fine a name for a waste-paper man, and the Samurai was started in business.

The first day Chobei lost himself, and had to pay a man to guide him home. He had bought no waste paper and Chohachi laughed at him, and scolded, too, saying,

"Call out! No one will know what you want if you walk about the streets in silence like a monk!"

Chobei was anxious to do all things right, for it pained him to be depending upon the good trader, and it hurt him still more to think of little O Tsuiu San sitting all day over her embroidery, trying to earn a few coins with which to boil the pot.

So, in order to grow used to the sound of his own voice, he went to an open lot, where there was not a house in sight, and shouted, "Waste paper! waste paper!" all day until he was hoarse. The street boys thought he was mad, and they laughed at him and threw stones. Then he went home more discouraged than



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“CHIOBEI WENT FORTH TO TRY AGAIN”

ever, and Chohachi, choked with laughter, explained again patiently,

"See, good Samurai, go into the back streets; rich people do not sell waste papers. Talk with the women, engage them with pleasant words and flattery, and then say, 'Perhaps you have some waste paper to sell.' "

So Chobei went forth to try again, and this time he sought in the poorer streets. There young women were washing upon the steps, children were playing upon the pavement, old women were talking in the doorways, and to them all Chobei smiled and bowed, "May the sun goddess smile upon you, honorable august Madame," he would say with his most courtly air. "That you and your honorable family are in good health is my wish. It gives me pleasure to meet you. I am from a far street and I ask the honor of your acquaintance. Have you any waste paper to sell?"

Although the good women understood, he might have left unsaid all his remarks except the last. But they were pleased with his air, and they ransacked their houses for waste paper. They called him the "Knightly Waste-paper Man," and soon he had a very good trade and earned many *yen*, which Chohachi helped him carefully to spend. Then O Tsuiu San and the little daughter whom the gods sent to them, were well cared for.

II

ONE day the Knightly Waste-paper Man was crying his wares through the streets when he saw a crowd about a man who had fallen by the way.

" 'Tis but a starving beggar," said one. But Chobei had learned much in the days when he had walked the streets without a *sen*¹ in his sleeves, and his heart was tender. He hurried to the beggar's aid and to his surprise found that he was no other than Bun-yemon, the ronin who had helped him to escape from his home, when his lord was angry so long ago. He caused him to be taken up and carried home.

That night Chobei talked long with Tsuiu.

"Gratitude is a sacred duty," he said. "But for this ronin perhaps we should have been murdered, and now that he has reached this low estate, it is our place to help him, but how?" O Tsuiu San sighed.

"In all these years, my lord," she said, "we have lived by the favor of the gods, but we have saved nothing. How much should we give Bun-yemon?"

"Not less than twenty-five gold *rio*,²" said Chobei. "It is a fortune! There is but one way in which we might obtain it. We might sell Iroka."

"Sell my daughter!" cried Tsuiu. "My lord, my

¹A Japanese coin equivalent to our cent. ²A Japanese ounce.

lord!" and she wept bitterly. Chobei wept also, but at last he said,

"It is terrible for me as well as for you, but do you not see that there is no other way?"

"There is no other way," said Tsuiu, to whom the will of her lord was law.

Then they told Iroka all the story and she said,

"Honorable parents, there is no other way. Permit me to be sold, for it is an honor for me to become a geisha for the debt of my parents."

Therefore, with many tears, they sold Iroka and, as she was very pretty, they obtained for her the sum of five and twenty gold *ryo*.

This Chobei bore to Bun-yemon who refused to take it; but Chobei, pretending to restore it to his own pocket, slipped it into a lacquered box and departed. After he was gone, the wife of Bun-yemon found the money, and her husband was very angry with her, that she had not watched more carefully.

"This good fellow should never have given me the money," he said. "He is poor—only a waste-paper man. I will not take it for anything. You must carry it back."

"But I know not where he lives," said the wife. "And since you have the money, let me go to the pawnshop and redeem your jeweled sword, that we may

sell the sword for a larger sum. . Then we can pay back Chobei and still have something for ourselves.”

After much coaxing Bun-yemon at last consented to do this and redeemed the sword. But the pawnbroker's clerk was angry, for he had expected to own the sword for the small sum which had been lent Bun-yemon. So he accused Bun-yemon of stealing the money and officers came and carried him to prison, setting a watch upon his wife.

She, however, determined to free her husband. The Machi-Bugyo of Yedo was the most righteous of judges and she went straight to him, escaping from the watchful eye of the officers when there was a fire in the neighborhood and every one was much excited. She found the Machi-Bugyo, as he was riding to inspect the firemen, and she knelt in the dust, catching hold of his bridle rein.

“Most noble Machi-Bugyo,” she cried. “Honorably deign to listen. They have taken my husband from me, and they accuse him unjustly. You, who are the friend of the poor, save him!”

The Lord of the city listened, and, being of a good heart, he had compassion upon the wife of Bun-yemon. He ordered the clerk of the pawnbroker to appear before him, and also Bun-yemon. And Chobei, hearing of the trouble, appeared and told that he had given

the twenty-five gold *rio*. Bun-yemon was therefore cleared from the charge of theft.

"Go in peace," said the Machi-Bugyo to him. "The master of the evil clerk shall pay a fine of one hundred gold *rio*, because a master should have only honest servants. The wicked clerk shall be put to death, for he witnessed falsely against an innocent man. The gold shall be given to Bun-yemon who must, with twenty-five *rio*, redeem the daughter of Chobei.

"As for you, Chobei, you have done well in paying your debt of gratitude at so great a cost to yourself; and your daughter is to be commended for her obedience. Take this reward for you both," and he gave him a hundred *yen*. "Be dismissed, for I have spoken."

Then were all happy, for Iroka was returned to her parents and Chobei's friend, Chohachi, was rewarded for his kindness of heart.

The whole matter soon coming to the ears of the Shogun, he commanded the old lord of Chobei to forgive him and restore him to his home. Then was Chobei, whom men again called Shindo, very happy, and he no longer cried "Waste Paper!" through the back streets of Yedo. But there he is not forgotten, for when the women gather to gossip they speak of him with smiles, saying ever of him, "Isuzure wo kite mo kokoro wa nishike (coat of rags, heart of brocade)."

THE HUNTER AND THE PRIEST

THERE was once a hunter who dwelt in the village of Kyoto and sought his game upon the mountain of Atagoyama. He was proud of being so mighty a hunter, for he never came empty-handed from the forest; yet at times he felt ill at ease. This was because he made a daily business of killing, and so he was displeasing to the Buddha.¹

To set his conscience at rest, therefore, he often made offerings of rice and fruit to a certain holy priest who dwelt in a little shrine upon the mountain-side.

The priest was very good. Studying the sacred books he dwelt in the solitude of the forest. He was so far from the homes of men that he would have fared ill had it not been for the visits of the hunter who brought to him supplies of things to eat.

One day the hunter came to the temple.

"Honorable one," he said politely, "I have brought you a bag of rice. May each grain be a prayer for me."

"Good friend," said the priest, "I thank you, and in return I will show you a miracle. For many years I

¹ Buddhism does not approve the taking of life.



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“I WILL SHOW YOU A MIRACLE”

have read and studied and reflected upon the Holy Books and it may be that I am receiving my reward. Know then, that each night the Buddha comes to me, here at the temple, riding upon an elephant. Do you not believe? Then tarry and see."

Speaking respectfully to the priest, the hunter said, "I long to see this wonderful thing." But in his heart he said to himself, "This thing can not be true."

Then he turned to the little temple boy and asked, "Have you seen this marvel?"

"Six times I have seen Fugen Bosatsu and fallen before him," said the boy; and the hunter marveled again.

Dark and silent was the night, save for the wind spirit who swept through the trees, now whispering softly, now moaning as if in pain. Behind the clouds the moon hid herself, throwing now and again fitful gleams across the little shrine at the door of which knelt the priest and his acolyte. Behind them stood the hunter, his heart filled with unbelief. No word was spoken and only a quick indrawing of the hunter's breath betokened his amazement as the vision came.

In the east arose a star, which grew and grew until the whole mountain-side seemed light; and then there appeared a snow-white elephant with six huge tusks. Upon his back was a rider, and as the figures neared

the temple, the priest and the temple boy threw themselves upon the ground, praying aloud to the Fugen Bosatsu.

But the hunter had no prayer within his soul. This thing seemed to him not holy but accursed, and, springing in front of the priest, he set a shaft, drew his bow to the full, and sent his arrow straight to the heart of the Buddha. Straight to the heart it went, clear to the feathers of the shaft, and lo! a terrible cry rent the air. No longer was there white light over the mountain. All was darkness.

"Demon in human form!" cried the priest. "Is it not enough that you spend your vile life destroying God's creatures upon the earth? To this sin, must you add that of destroying Buddha himself?"

"Not so," replied the hunter. "Be not so rash. Judgment of others is far too great a sin for one so holy as yourself. Listen, and I will explain what I have done. I have not destroyed the Buddha. You have been deceived. Do you think it is possible that I could see Fugen Bosatsu? I am a mighty hunter, stained with the blood of living creatures. This is displeasing to the Buddha. Now then, would he reveal himself to me? The boy too is but a lad, and why should he see holy visions? You think because you have read and studied much, and because you are of a pure life

and a truthful tongue that the Buddha desires to do you honor and reveal to you Fugen Bosatsu. No, good sir, for were this true, you alone could see the vision and it would not be vouchsafed to two sinful ones beside.

"Indeed, you saw not Fugen Bosatsu, but something deceiving and false; and when the morning comes I will prove to you that I speak the truth."

So when the morning broke in golden streams across the mountain-top the hunter and the priest looked long and carefully, and they found a spot of blood where had stood the vision of the night. Another and another they found, forming a slender trail which led deep into the forest, and ever the crimson trail grew larger and larger until at last they found a pool of blood beside the body of a huge badger which lay dead, pierced by an arrow.

"See," said the hunter. "You have been deceived though you are far holier than I. All your study can not teach you what I was taught by common sense."

THE PRINCESS MOONBEAM

A WOODMAN once dwelt with his wife at the edge of the forest, under the shadow of the Honorable Mountain. The two were industrious and good, but though they loved each other they were not happy. No children had come to bless them and this the wife mourned deeply.

The husband pitied her and treated her very kindly, yet still she was sad. As she gazed upon the snows of Fujiyama her heart swelled within her and she prostrated herself and said, "Fuji no Yama, Honorable Mountain, my heart is heavy because no childish arms encircle my neck, no little head nestles in my bosom. From thy eternal purity send some little white soul to comfort me!"

The Honorable Mountain spoke not; yet as she prayed, lo, from its heights there sparkled and glowed a tiny light. Fitful and gleaming it seemed, yet it had a silver radiance as of the moon.

The woodman's wife beheld it, and she called to her husband eagerly, "Come hither, I pray you. See the strange light which comes from Fuji San. I seem to

see a face smiling at me. It is the face of a little child!"

Then her husband smiled at her fancy, but, because he loved her, he said indulgently, "I will go and see what it is."

"I thank you, my lord; go quickly!" she replied.

So, quickly he went to the forest, and as he neared a mountain stream, with Fuji gleaming cold and white in the moonlight, he saw the strange light, which seemed to hover and rest upon the branches of a tall bamboo. Hastening thither he found there a moon child, a tiny, fragile, fairy thing, more beautiful than any child he had ever seen.

"Little creature," he said. "Who are you?"

"My name is Princess Moonbeam," she answered sweetly. "My mother is the Moon Lady, and she has sent me to Earth because every Moon Child must do some good thing, else will its silvery light become pale and wan and be of no avail."

"Little Princess," he said eagerly, "the best of good deeds is to comfort a sad heart. Come home with me and be a child to my wife, who weeps for children. Thus will your beams grow bright."

"I will go with you," said the little Moonbeam, and, rejoicing greatly, he bore her tenderly to his wife.

"I bring you a treasure," he said, "The Moon Lady



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“LOVELIER GREW THE MOON CHILD EVERY YEAR”

sends you this beam of light to lighten your sad heart."

Then was his wife much overjoyed and she took the little creature to her bosom and cared for her.

Lovelier grew the Moon Child every year and much she rejoiced the hearts of her foster parents. Her hair was like a golden aureole about her face. Her eyes were deep and tender, her cheeks were pale and delicate, and about her there was a subtle and unearthly charm. Every one loved her, even the emperor's son, who, hunting in the forest, saw her lighting up the humble cottage with her heavenly light. He loved her dearly and she loved him, but alas! she could not marry him because her life upon the earth could be but twenty years. Then she must return to her home in the moon, for so willed her mother the Moon Lady.

At last the day came when she must go. Her parents wept, and could not be consoled; and her lover, who was now the emperor, could not keep her, although he besought High Heaven to spare her.

Her mother caught her up in a silver moonbeam; and all the way to the Moon the little Princess wept silvery tears. As the tears fell from her eyes, lo! they took wings and floated away looking for the form of her beloved, the emperor, who might see her no more.

But the silver-bright tears are seen to this day float-

ing hither and yon about the vales and marshes of fair Nippon. The children chase them with happy cries, and say, "See the fireflies! How fair they are! Whence came they?"

Then their mothers relate to them the legend and say, "These are the tears of the little Princess, flitting to seek her beloved"; and over all, calm and eternal, smiles the Honorable Mountain.

THE SINGLE LANTERN OF YAMATO

THERE was a poor woman in Yamato who was very good. She prayed daily at the graves of her parents, although she was very old. Daily she placed there some grains of rice, although she was very, very poor. She went to the temple whenever she was able, and prayed much. She was kind to the poor and gave always to the hungry, so that often she went hungry herself.

"It is better to be hungry than to grow hard of heart," she said.

Now they made a grand temple in Yamato and all the people were proud and gave to it many *yen*. They gave a lantern of bronze so wonderfully fine that all men wondered, for the workmanship was delicate and beautiful. The lantern makers had sat and wrought upon it for days with matchless skill and patience. The stand was large and the light so small as to seem but a mere glimmer of the light of the world.

Many lanterns were given to the temple and a rich man gave a thousand large ones.

"All men shall see that I am of a generous heart," he said proudly to himself.



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“SHE WENT TO THE TEMPLE AND PRAYED MUCH”

The poor woman was grieved at heart.

"I have nothing to give," she said. "The gods would accept nothing that I have." She looked carefully over her poor little house, but alas! There was nothing any one would buy. She had only the barest necessities and these much worn and used for many years.

At last she bethought herself that she still possessed one thing which she might sell. Her hair was yet long and black. It might not bring much, but it would be worth something.

"I am too old to marry, no one cares how I look," she said, smiling to herself. "I will sell my hair to make a temple offering."

So she sold it for a small sum, which happily she found was enough to buy one little temple light. This she joyfully placed upon the shrine.

How tiny it looked beside the rich man's great ones! Yet its light seemed to her to warm her old heart into fresher life, and she was happy.

That night there was a great festival in the temple. All the lamps were lighted, from the great ones of the rich man to the tiny one which the poor woman had placed there with such loving care.

The whole temple was aglow with light, and all the people praised the rich man and said, "How generous he is! How great!"

But just as they were praising him and admiring the lights, there sprang up a sudden fierce wind. It blew so wild a gust that the light of all the great lanterns of the rich man went out, and all was darkness. Yet not all—for lo! there gleamed through the gloom a tiny light, as bright as the light of day. It was the little light of the poor woman, which with its spark seemed to light the whole great temple, and all the people wondered. Then they looked with care to see whence came the little light and when they found it was the gift of so humble a soul they marveled again. But the priest of the temple, who was old and good and very wise, said, "Do not marvel! In the sight of the All Knowing One, the poor gift of a good heart is more worthy than all the splendor of the rich and proud."

THE SOUL OF THE SAMURAI

FAR upon a Western headland the pine trees waved their arms to the sea and the sea god loved them and dashed his high foaming spray to send them greeting. Giant *torii*¹ rose heavenward, that the Golden Crow, the strange and mystic Hobo Bird, might rest there, in his swift flight toward the sun god.

The sea flowed restless and proud at the foot of the cliffs and the beach was soft and treacherous, and the sea god yearly claimed a victim, when the air was heavy with the sweet scent of the wild pittosporum.

O Nitta San was a great warrior. He fought for Go-Daigo the emperor and was his faithful general. Many a battle he fought and won, though the men of the Hojo Clan were many and strong and fought well. But when he reached the headland of the pines, the soul of O Nitta San was heavy within him.

"The men of the Hojo guard the sea with ships, they watch the hills with archers," he said to his head man. "They are as many as the waves of the sea. Our fate is in the hands of the gods!"

¹An archway placed before certain shrines in Japan; originally a perch for sacred fowl heralding the approach of day.

"The favor of the gods must be won, O Nitta San," said the head man. "I am of small account, but let me throw myself into the sea, and perchance the sea god may accept the sacrifice and smile upon you, my master."

"Not so," replied O Nitta San. "I myself will appease the god of the sea, that he may grant us a passage to conquer the city, for the glory of my master the emperor."

"Honorably the emperor will reward you," said the head man bowing low, but O Nitta San shook his head.

"I desire no reward," he said. "Do you hear the chirp of that bird? In a land where even the wild songsters of the forest cry 'Chiu,'¹ do not think a Samurai needs a reward."

O Nitta San turned him to the cliffs, and he raised his hands to the sea god and prayed long and earnestly. Then he drew from its scabbard his sword, and lovingly he gazed upon its keen and shining blade. He raised it toward the clouds and it gleamed in the moonlight like a shimmering serpent.

"Beloved comrade, Soul of the Samurai,"² he cried. "Well have you served me in many a fierce battle. You are a friend as well as a servant. Now serve me once again and appease the wrath of the sea god!" For a moment he lovingly laid the sword against his breast,

¹ Loyalty.

² In Japan, a title given to the sword.



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“HE LAID HIS SWORD AGAINST HIS BREAST”

then "God of the Sea," he cried aloud, "accept my sacrifice and care for the Soul of the Samurai." And so saying he cast far from him the sword.

It screamed through the air and smote the water, and a myriad sparkling crystals rose into the air. They leaped to encircle the sword, as if lovingly encrusting it with diamonds. It rose upon a wave, it fell, the pearl-like foam covered it, and O Nitta San saw it no more.

But from the sea came a dull murmuring sound, and the waters rolled back from the cliffs and a passageway appeared.

"Kompira has accepted my sacrifice," cried O Nitta San. "We may pass over in safety to conquest and glory."

Then the army passed over at the edge of the cliff, and they fought a mighty battle with the Hojo and took the city.

Go-Daigo was glad, and he greatly rewarded O Nitta San who was proud and of a good heart fighting for the emperor.

He offered much rice and millet to Kompira, god of the sea, but never, so long as he lived, did he smile when the sun-crested waves sparkled and broke into diamonds before him, for he murmured to himself, "Oh, Kompira, God of the Sea, deal gently with my offering, be kind to the Soul of the Samurai."

THE DREAM OF THE GOLDEN BOX

HOJO TOKIMASA had two daughters. Musako, the elder, was as beautiful as the eight beauties of Omi. Her hair was as black as polished ebony, her eyes were deep and dark and full of fire, her skin was smooth as ivory. She was clever, too, as well as beautiful. But her sister Ume was the favorite of her father.

Ume was sweet and gentle and her father thought to marry her well, though she had not her sister's beauty.

One night, Ume dreamed a good-luck dream, that a bird brought her a golden box, and she told her sister, while she arranged the elder's ebon locks in the early morning.

"That is a dream of good omen," said Musako. "Give it to me and I will give you in return my golden mirror, into which I have so often gazed."

Now little Ume did not wish to part with her good-luck dream at all; but, more than anything in the world, she desired to share her sister's beauty. So she said, as she thrust a superb jade hairpin into place, "I will give you the dream, fair sister, and may it bring you

good fortune; and so may I, gazing into your mirror, gain some of your radiant beauty, for to you the gods have been kind."

Musako smiled at the flattery, and thought much all day upon the happy dream.

Late in the twilight, when the moon shone through the flowering plum tree and the fragrance of the plum blossoms stole over the garden, and the nightingale sang of love in the branches, there came a bold knock at the castle gate.

When the gate was opened and the stranger bidden welcome in the name of the god of hospitality, he spoke simply, "I am Yoritomo. The men of the Taira pursue me, and Kiyomori, their chief, has slain my father and many of my father's house. You are my father's friend. Of you I ask shelter."

"You are welcome," said Hojo. "Abide with us until safety awaits you without."

Then Yoritomo thanked him and did remain. Ere long he sent his retainer into Hojo's presence to act as go-between, and ask him for the hand of his daughter Ume. He had seen her. She was gentle and discreet. She was the favorite of the old man, her father. Why should he not be adopted into the family for her sake?

But his retainer desired ever the best for his beloved



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“SHE ARRANGED HER SISTER’S EBON LOCKS”

master. He had seen the radiant beauty of Musako as she had walked in the arbor of wistaria, herself a fairer flower, even, than the long purple racemes swaying in the breeze. He decided in his own mind that the elder sister was the one for his master.

"The falcon may not mate with the dove," he said to himself. "O Musako San is far more beautiful than her sister and more clever. She will be a better mate for my glorious master than the gentle dove her sister. I shall request her hand of Hojo San."

So he demanded O Musako San from her father, and that good man was much distressed.

"Truly I should like to give my daughter to your master," he said. "But she is promised to a lord of the Taira Clan and I dare not break my word to him."

Then the retainer returned to Yoritomo very sad. He bore such glowing accounts of the beauty and cleverness of O Musako San that Yoritomo's curiosity was fired, and by night he stole beneath the window where she sat peering into the garden and wondering when the good-luck bird would fly to her.

How fair she was! And when she saw the handsome youth who gazed so ardently upon her, how kindly her eyes looked upon him! Yoritomo determined that she and no other should be his wife. He stole her upon her very wedding day, not, perhaps, without her father's

knowledge, and through all the troubles of his career, she was his faithful wife.

But gazing into Musako's mirror, the little sister grew fairer every day, and she wedded a great lord and bore him many sons.

THE PRINCESS OF THE SEA

A BEAUTIFUL princess lived in the depths of the sea. She was fairer than any mortal maiden, and sweet as she was fair. Her voice was as gentle as the sea waves lapping the strand, her sigh was as soft as the sound of the wind through the reeds of the shore, and her laugh was musical as the tinkle of water through the coral branches.

Her mother was no more, but her father, the old Sea King, adored her and gave her all the treasures of the deep. Her necklace was of coral, her girdle was of pearls, her hairpins were of curiously carved tortoise shell, her kimono was embroidered with feathery seaweed, and her floating *obi* with delicate trceries of kelp, encircled her slender waist.

The princess lived in a magnificent palace built of mother-of-pearl. All the creatures of the sea had given to its adornment. Pearls gleamed from its walls, amber pillars, like shafts of light, supported its roof, while a million lights gleamed from branching corals. The walls were tinted in exquisite colors and decorated with sprays of seaweed floating in cool green waves in which

the fish seemed really swimming, so natural did they appear.

The princess did not always stay in this home, beautiful as it was. She loved the fresh breath of the open sea. It brought the color into her cheeks and made her happy. When she went forth she rode upon a dolphin, who plunged through the sea foam and rode over the crested waves with careless grace.

One day the princess mounted his back for a long ride. The next day and the next she went again and always in the same direction. Then her father noticed that she seemed sad, and he said to her, "Where do you go each day, my daughter? Why is it that you do not stay at home?"

"It is lonely here, my father," she answered. "I like to ride upon the top of the waves, for there I can watch the strange beings who live upon the land. You talk to me of marrying. Find me a sea-prince like one of those mortals whom I have seen and I will marry him."

"Whom have you seen?" demanded her father, much astonished, for he did not know that she had ever seen a mortal.

"I know not his name," said the maiden. "But I have seen him upon the shore. He fishes there and I have heard many of the fishes say how kind he is and

how gentle. He is handsome, too. He fishes only for such sea food as he must eat and he puts back into the water all those fish which are not good for him to eat. Oh, my father! I love this youth! He is so great and strong! Bring him to me!" and the little princess clasped her hands together as she looked at her father.

But the Sea King was angry. "It is not fitting that you should think such thoughts," he said in high displeasure. "A sea princess should not marry a mere mortal. Tarry at home henceforth! No more shall you go to ride upon the dolphin!"

So the poor little princess stayed at home and pined. She missed the fresh air of the upper sea and the sight of the blue sky, but above all she missed the young fisherman. At last she grew weak and ill and her father could endure it no longer.

"Are you pining still for that young mortal?" he asked one day; and she replied,

"Oh, my father, unless I speak with him my heart will break!"

"Go to the shore where he fishes," said the Sea King. "Change yourself into a sea turtle and allow him to catch you in his net. You say he is of such a wonderful kindness—well, Mortals do not eat such turtles; and so if he throws you down upon the sands to die, I will rescue you, but if he places you again in the water, I

give my consent to your bringing him here to my palace."

This the wily old king said, thinking the fisherman would surely throw the turtle aside; but the princess smiled happily, for she knew he would prove kind.

Now Urashima, for that was the fisherman's name, knew nothing at all of all this. When therefore next day he found in his net a huge turtle, he said to himself, "Well, my fine fellow, what a pity it is that you are not eatable! You would make a good meal for my honorable parents were you as good as you are big. But since you are not, run along home to your friends," and he dropped the turtle back into the waves.

What was his surprise to see rise from the sea and come toward him across the crested waves, a huge dolphin, carrying on its back a sea nymph fair as the dawn. She cast upon him a sun-bright glance and said,

"Come with me, oh Mortal! Come to the depths of my sea-girt home and see my palace of emerald and pearl. I was that turtle which you cast into the sea, for I took that form to see if you were of as great kindness of heart as the fishes said."

Urashima stood spellbound and stared at the vision of loveliness before him.

"Come with me," said the princess, again. "The coral caves await you,—will you not come?"



(100)

“A DOLPHIN CARRYING ON ITS BACK A SEA NYMPH”

"Not for all the wealth of the ocean would I leave my beloved home, but to be with you, loveliest of sea nymphs," cried Urashima, bewitched by her beauty and loveliness.

He went with her to the depths of the ocean and there memory fell from him, and he forgot his home. He thought only of the princess and basked in the sunshine of her smile.

So they were married and lived happily, and even the old Sea King grew to like Urashima and blessed him before he died.

Urashima had lived in the Dragon Palace of the Princess of the Sea what seemed to him but a short time when memory came to him again. He thought of his father and mother and of his little brothers and sisters, and he grew sad. The princess watched him and her heart sank.

"He will go from me and not return," she sighed. "Alas! alas! for mortal love!"

Urashima at last said to the princess, "Beloved princess, I have spent these months of our life together in happiness so great that I would that it could last forever. I remember, however, my old home and the dear ones I left there. Give me leave, therefore, to return to earth for but a day, that I may see them once more. They know not where I am. They know noth-

ing of my happiness. Let me go, and quickly I will return."

"Alas, my beloved, you will never return," she said. "Never more will your deep sea home see you again,—that my poor heart tells me. But if the yearning for home has seized you, I may not keep you here. Go, but take this with you," and she handed him a casket made of a single pearl and set with a picture of the princess. "So long as you keep this unopened you may return; but open it, and you will never see me again. Farewell."

So Urashima returned to earth bearing with him the little casket.

His home seemed strange to him. The village street was not what it used to be; his father's house no longer stood beneath the tall bamboo; he saw no familiar faces. At last, puzzled and distressed, he asked a passer-by if he knew aught of the people of Urashima.

"Urashima!" he answered in amazement. "He was drowned in the sea, many, many years ago. His people all lie buried on the hill. Their very tombs are lichen-grown with age."

"Am I dreaming," cried Urashima. "My Sea Princess, what have you done to me?"

Then seizing the casket he gazed upon the face of the nymph and as he did so a strange desire came over

him to see what was within. He opened it just a crack and a thin, gray smoke rose toward heaven, and in the curling clouds he seemed to see the lovely form of the princess, and her eyes gazed sadly at him. Then he looked down at himself in wonder. From a stalwart youth he had become a white-haired old man; and, weeping bitterly, he stretched forth his hands to the sea.

"Ah, my princess, farewell forever. Without thee I faint and die. Thy love alone gave life," and he sank down upon the sands and was no more.

He had been gone from earth a thousand years.

THE FIREFLY OF MATSUI

SHIZOKU of Matsui loved a maiden called Kenneibotaru, for she was bright and sparkling. Late one snowy night he was returning from a wedding party when amidst the tiny snowflakes which were beginning to fall, he saw a strange light flicker and flash before him.

“Kagaribo mo
Hotaru mo hikaru
Genji kama!”¹

he exclaimed, wondering that the O-botaro (great firefly) should be flitting about in winter snows.

As he gazed upon it, the creature flashed and darted toward him and so annoyed him that he thrust at it with the stick he carried.

Hither and yon it flashed, like a will-o'-the-wisp until at last it darted away into the garden of the house wherein dwelt his betrothed.

The next day he saw his beloved, and she said to him

¹ “Is that the glimmer of far festal fires,
Or the shimmering of the firefly?
Ah, it is the Genji!”



(105)

“HE THRUST AT IT WITH THE STICK”

shyly, "Last night I had a strange dream. I thought I had wings and could fly and that I was flying through the night. It was cold and there was snow in the air and I said to myself, 'Where is my beloved that I may fly to his breast and be warm?' Then I saw you coming swiftly toward the bridge with your lantern, though the moon shone bright in the heavens. Then I flew to you, but you were not overjoyed to receive me. You struck at me and drove me from you, and I fled in terror into the garden where I hid myself in the heart of a plum blossom, and the snow fell upon me and I was cold. Then I awoke and I was afraid, and something whispered to me 'His heart is cold to you as was the heart of the plum blossom when the snow fell upon it!' What means my dream?"

"Indeed, I can not tell," he made answer. "But I know well you read its meaning wrong. Were I to drive you from me and you to seek another, then would your heart's resting place be cold as was the plum blossom of your dream. But trouble not yourself, beloved, for never shall I drive you away," and he smiled upon her and the heart of O Botaru San was comforted.

THE MOUNTAIN ROSE

OTA DAKWAN was a noble *daimio*.¹ His castle was filled with retainers who waited upon him, at his least word flying to obey his commands. Men vied with each other to do him honor, bowing low before him as he passed and saying "Behold Ota Dakwan, the Daimio!"

Young maidens blushed at his name and when the moon shone through the lattice, sighed to the nightingale to sing the praises of this splendid warrior.

Honors crowded thick upon him, but of it all he wearied and often sought the forest, there to hunt in solitude. Where the great trees spread their branches and the bamboos and the pines talked together he spent many hours, returning to his castle at night, weary, but with his game bag full.

Often people said to him, "What do you find so wonderful in the forests of the hill country?"

"Sunlight and shade," he answered, "everglade and waterfall, game to hunt and no one to say me nay; above all, the mighty mountain, cool and aloof as is

¹ Lord or knight.

the spirit of the great;" and at his answer men wondered.

One day Ota Dakwan hunted long upon the mountain-side, so long that he wandered far from home and a great storm of rain came upon him, from which there was no shelter. He was glad, therefore, when in a lonely spot he saw a tiny cottage beside a grove of great bamboos, and he ran to it for shelter.

Within was a young maiden who smiled upon him, but spoke not. She was beautiful as a dream though poorly clad, and he said to her, "Will you lend me a straw rain coat? for every tree in the forest sends down her showers and I shall be drenched before I can reach my home."

The maiden blushed deeply and without a word hastily left the room. In a moment she returned, her delicate cheeks flushed pink, carrying a *yamabuki*¹ blossom which she placed in his hand, still with no word, only a sigh and a blush.

"What means this?" he asked, much puzzled. "I ask protection from the rain and you give me a flower. Were you not as fair as the first cherry blooms of spring, I could find it in my heart to be angry with you. Speak!" But she only shook her head and sighed, and, angry at last, he turned on his heel and

¹ Wild rose.



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“SHE RETURNED CARRYING A *YAMABUKI*”

left her, going forth into the rain, the flower still in his hand.

He, the adored of all Yeddo, to be laughed at by a mere country maiden who would not even speak to him! At this thought his heart rose within him, but remembering how sweetly she smiled and how like a rose she blushed, his anger melted away.

"She was as the flower she gave me, a mountain rose," he thought to himself. Then he raised the delicate blossom to his face and its sweet scent was as the breath of morning, fresh and kind. The rain ceased, and hurrying homeward he was met by his head man who greeted him anxiously. To him he told his strange adventure, and the head man said, "The poet says 'the mountain rose has many petals but it has no seed.'¹ The maiden meant to tell you in poetic vein that she possessed no rain coat. She is the fair, dumb daughter of your lordship's keeper, and they are very poor."

"They shall be so no longer," said the daimio. "For one with so fair a soul should have fairer surroundings, and one upon whom the gods have laid a finger should have kindness from those of this world."

Then he showed much kindness to her father, and to the maiden, sending to them gifts of rice and tea

¹ *Mino*, the Japanese word for "seed," means also a rain coat.

and rich garments. And oftentimes, when tired with his morning's hunt, he would rest within the little lonely hut, and Yamabuki would serve him a cup of tea with a shy grace. Whenever he spoke to her it was with kindness and she would smile and blush and sigh a little, while he murmured to himself, "The god of silence laid his finger upon your lips, Yamabuki, little silent one."

THE EVIL ONE AND THE RAT

WHEN the Spirit of Creation had finished his work, he came down from Heaven and gazed upon what he had done.

He saw the mountains gleaming pure against the blue, the rivers winding silvery to the sea, the rice fields lying warm and moist in the valleys—and it was good. He gazed upon the trees waving in the wind, the iris fields and the lotus ponds, the cherry blooms and the plum blossoms, and he smiled well pleased.

Then the Evil One appeared to him and with a hateful voice said, “Do not flatter yourself that you have done all well in this world. Indeed you have not. There are many things which are neither pretty nor useful. See how ugly this thistle is, and of what use is the bramble? Had I made things I would have done much better.”

Then the Spirit of Creation was very angry. He thought a thing of wrath and created a rat. It was large and fierce, and it quickly jumped into the mouth of the Evil One and bit out his tongue. Then was the Evil One in great rage and he uttered horrid cries and



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"HE DANCED AN EVIL DANCE UPON THE GRASS"

danced an evil dance upon the grass. He thought to himself, "Since the rats are here, they shall be made to be a torment to the earth," and he made them increase greatly until they overran the Land of the Ainu.

At this the people were very unhappy. "Oh, Creating Spirit," they cried, "take away these pests, for they eat our grain and our rice, they gnaw our huts, they frighten our children. Destroy them, oh kind Creating Spirit."

But the Spirit shook his head. "Not so," he said, "I may not destroy that which I have once made. But I will create another thing which shall war with the rats, and so you shall be helped in your distress."

He created straightway cats and the cats warred greatly upon the rats so that they grew less. Then were the people pleased and rejoiced, but an old man said to them, "Speak not evil of the rats, nor of anything which the Creating Spirit has made. It must be that the Creating Spirit is displeased when his works are spoken ill of, for he punished the Evil One for so doing. Besides, everything created is of some use. Even the rat bit off the tongue of the Evil One."

THE PAINTER OF CATS

ONCE upon a time a long, long time ago there was a boy who was clever and polite and kind, and it would seem as if he was a very fine boy indeed. But he had one fault. He would draw pictures of cats.

Now that does not appear to be a very bad fault, but the trouble was that Kihachi would not do anything else. He drew cats at school when he should have been studying his lessons. He drew them when all the other children were at play and when it would have been far better for him to have been running and jumping.

When his brothers and sisters were sleeping peacefully at night upon their wooden pillows, Kihachi would arise from his sleeping mat and, stealing to the paper partitions of the little room into which streamed the moonlight, he would draw cats. In the early morning when the sun gleamed over the tiny garden and the dew lay like jewels upon the rice fields, still Kihachi could be found drawing cats.

He drew large cats and small cats, mother cats and kittens. He drew them even upon his clothes, and this

caused his mother much annoyance, though she was very patient. When, however, it came to pass that she found a whole family of kittens playing their pranks, in pencil, upon her own best *obi*,¹ she felt that something must be done.

"My lord," she said to her husband, "this boy and his cats make me too much trouble. I have done everything to cause him to stop, but to no avail. I have even burned him with the *moxa*² but still he does not cease. He says he can not. Our other sons are able to help you in the field and our daughter is a great assistance to me in the household. But Kihachi does not work, and his schoolmaster says he will not study. He will do nothing but draw cats. What shall we do with him?"

"It may be that so strange a boy will grow up to be something quite different from us," said his father. "He is always agreeable. Every morning he says most politely, 'O hayo, O tat' San, O hayo, O oka San.'³ It seems to me *Bot chan*⁴ is not bad. Perhaps he would make a good priest. Let us take him to the temple and see if he will not there forget his cats."

So they took him to the temple and the priest re-

¹ Sash.

² Punk.

³ Good morning, Father—Good morning, Mother.

⁴ Boy.

ceived them with courtesy. "Enter, honorably enter!" he said, and they entered saying, "We have brought to you our youngest boy in the hope that you will graciously permit him to become your acolyte."

The priest asked Kihachi many questions, very difficult ones, and these he answered so cleverly that the old man said to the parents, "This child is destined to be great. He is very clever. Leave him with me and I will teach him all he needs to become a priest."

So Kihachi stayed in the temple and he studied very hard. He liked to get up early as the mists were breaking over Fuji San and the temple bells were ringing in the dawn. He loved to sit in the twilight when the flowers of the *yamabuki* are mirrored in the still marsh waters. He loved to pluck the primrose, flower of happiness, and to twine it with the *nanten*¹ into wreaths for the shrine of Buddha. He liked to read and to study the sacred books and he learned many prayers, but still he liked to draw, and still he drew cats.

He drew them on the margins of the books, on the prayer rolls, on the very *kakemonos*² of the temple, and this much displeased the good old priest.

¹ Heavenly bamboo, a tree with bright scarlet berries.

² Hangings or pictures.

At last he could not stand it any longer and he called the boy to him. Kihachi bowed very low, his hands and forehead touching the floor.

"Bot chan," said the priest, "you will never make a good priest. You may some day become a great artist, but you will never be anything else. You had better go away from the temple and seek your fortune in the world. Here is a bag of rice for you. Put it in a bundle of your clothes, and go, and may good fortune go with you. I will give you one last bit of advice, When darkness gathers, fear great places, seek small shelter."

Kihachi thanked the priest and went mournfully away from the temple. It seemed to him as if he was always to be unhappy because of his cats, but he could not help drawing them. He was afraid to go home, for he knew his father would punish him for disobeying the priest. He did not know what to do. At last he thought of a large temple in the next village, and wondered if some of the priests there would not take him for an acolyte.

"At least I can try," he said, and hurried on, hoping to reach the temple before night.


It was a long way, and his feet grew very sore and he was tired. So it was a great disappointment when he reached the temple to find it deserted. Not a priest

was there to offer incense, not an acolyte to ring the temple bells.

"How strange it is that everything is covered with dust! There are cobwebs spun over the altars!" he said. "It seems to me an acolyte is needed. I shall stay at least for the night and perhaps to-morrow the priests may return. They will commend me if I make things very clean."

He laid down his bundle and began to clean the temple with a will, and soon it was quite free from dirt and dust. Then he sat down and rested, but noticing a large screen with quite a blank space upon it, he drew out his writing box and began to draw cats as hard as he could draw.

He thought nothing of how time was passing until suddenly he noticed it was growing quite dark, and he began to be a little afraid. He looked about him. How huge and deserted seemed the temple hall! How small a boy he was! Then he remembered the old priest's parting words, "When darkness hovers, fear great places, seek small shelters." Surely this was a great place! He hunted about hoping to find a small place which might be safer, and, surely enough, there was a tiny recess in the wall with a door which could be slid into place. He entered and found there was just room enough for him to curl up and go to sleep,





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“HE BEGAN TO DRAW CATS”

which he did, for he was so tired that sleep came to him quickly.

He slept soundly, but at last was awakened by a loud noise. It seemed as if a thousand ogres were fighting, and with the noise of the fighting came horrid screams. Kihachi was afraid to make a peephole in the paper partition, and so he lay very still until at last there was a more awful scream than before and the sound of a heavy fall. Then all was still.

Kihachi lay quite still until the morning light began to creep into his cabinet, and then he thought, "I must get up and ring the dawn bell; for when the priests return they will be pleased to find that I have attended to everything."

So he jumped up and hastened to ring the bell. Pure and clear its tones rang out over the cool morning air, and Kihachi noticed figures in the valley below moving rapidly, and he said, "Here come the priests. I hope they will be pleased with what I have done."

Then he went to look at the cats he had drawn in the great temple hall the night before. But what a sight met his eyes! Upon the floor of the temple was a pool of blood and beside it the body of a fierce and terrible rat, the largest he had ever seen. It was as large as a cow, indeed it was a monster rat goblin.

"What killed you?" he cried, "there must have

been a battle royal here in the night, for I heard sounds as if an army of cats was let loose."

Then his heart stood still, for he saw that the mouths of all the cats he had drawn were covered with blood!

"My cats killed the rat goblin!" he cried joyfully; and at that moment he heard steps and turning, saw the headman of the village with several other men entering the temple.

"What does this mean?" asked the headman. "Do you not know that this temple is haunted by a terrible rat goblin? Surely you did not spend the night here?"

"I spent it quite comfortably," said Kihachi, "and I think the goblin is dead." Then he showed the headman the rat and his cats, and told him what had happened in the night. The headman said, "It is well that you obeyed the old priest's instructions to 'seek small shelters.' This goblin has haunted the temple for many months and no one who has come here has ever returned. Your cats are very lifelike; I believe that some day you will be a great artist. In the city yonder you will find my brother. Go to him and tell him your story. He will help you. You have done my village a good turn with your cats, so here is a present to help you along;" and he gave him twenty *yen*.

Then was Kihachi very glad in his heart, and he made his thanks to the headman and went his way.

And thereafter, when he became a great artist and taught many boys to draw, he laughed as he told his pupils, "My first great picture was a drawing of cats, and for it I received twenty *yen*." And his pupils were much astonished and called him always "The Painter of Cats."

THE COMING OF BENTEN SAMA

LONG ago the river of Kashigoye flowed into the sea by the Marsh of the Terrible Dragons. The dragons were five, and yearly they came forth and devoured the maidens of the village and there was no way to hinder. But the people cried loudly to Benten Sama, the goddess of mothers, the bestower of love and beauty.

Now Benten Sama had many sons: Daikoku, who gives wealth, Ebisu, who is the god of fishermen, Hatei, who is full of mirth, and others equally renowned.

Of all these sons, Benten Sama loved Ebisu best, and for his sake all fishermen were dear to her. When, therefore, O Ume San, daughter of the headman of the village, besought the blessing of the gentle goddess upon her lover, a fisherman, Benten Sama listened.

"Goddess of Mercy," murmured the girl. "Send thy blessing upon him, for my honorable father will not consent to our union. He says, 'When the five Dragons of the Marshlands are no more thou shalt marry this fisher lad.' I pray you, gentle goddess, soften the heart of my father, and may thy son Ebisu bestow his favor upon Hakuga."



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BENTEN SAMA

Benten Sama listened to the girl's prayer and smiled. She whispered to her son and he was kind. He filled Hakuga's nets with fish and these brought many *yen*. He then approached the father of O Ume San and besought of him his daughter, his Go-between¹ saying, "Honorably deign to listen to the prayer of Hakuga and give to him your daughter, for he has many *yen*!" But the father replied ever the same, "When the five Marsh Dragons are no more," and the Go-between returned sadly to Hakuga.

Then the maiden prayed again to Benten Sama and she said, "Kind Goddess, hear! Send some curse upon the five Marsh Dragons, that Hatei your son may bestow mirth upon us, for we are sad."

Then Benten Sama thought, and that which she thought was good. It was the time of the red maple leaf² and Tatsu Hima³ ruled. Benten Sama asked her aid, as she flaunted her banners upon the hillside, and that night there came a fearful storm. The storm howled and shrieked, and all the people cowered in terror. All night it raged, and the thunder god gave five mighty roars, and at each roar a dragon lay dead.

And when the sun god lighted the world, all was still

¹ A Japanese never asks for a wife himself. He always sends a professional matchmaker who is called a "Go-between."

² November.

³ Goddess of Autumn.

and smiling, the Marsh of the Dragons was gone, and in its stead rose an island, green and beautiful, and above it hovered Benten Sama, throned upon a rainbow.

Then were the people much pleased at their deliverance from the five Dragons of the Marsh, and they made a shrine to Benten Sama at that point where she had appeared.

And O Ume San married the fisherman and they lived happily ever after.

THE WATERFALL WHICH FLOWED SAKÉ

ONCE there was a poor woodcutter who toiled early and late for a living. He worked harder than others, because he loved his old father and mother dearly, and wished to give them all the good things of life. But though he was more diligent than any other woodcutter of the village, he never seemed able to gain enough *sen* to buy *saké* and tea, but only enough for rice and bread.

One day he climbed high up on the mountain to find the best wood. It was a very steep mountain, and no one else would try to climb so high. So he worked alone. Chop, chop, his axe broke the stillness and soon he had a goodly pile of logs.

Stopping for a moment to rest, he saw a badger lying asleep under a tree, and he thought to himself, "Aha, my fine little beastie! You will make a fine morsel for my father's supper. He and my mother have not tasted meat for many a day."

The longer he looked at the badger, however, the less he wanted to kill him. He was such a little creature

and it seemed mean to kill a sleeping thing and one so much smaller than himself!

"No," he said to himself at last, "I can not kill him! I will but work the harder that I may earn money to buy my parents some meat!"

Now the badger seemed to understand and approve of this resolve on the part of the young woodcutter. He opened one eye and then the other. Then he blinked saucily at the woodcutter.

"Thank you," he said. "That was a wise conclusion."

The young man dropped his axe and jumped high into the air, so great was his astonishment at hearing a badger talk.

"You couldn't kill me if you tried," said the badger. "Besides, I am far more useful to you alive than dead. And now, because you have proved yourself of a kind heart, I will show you kindness. Bring me the flat, white stone which lies beneath yonder pine tree."

The woodcutter turned to obey, and suddenly stopped in wonder. Spread upon the stone was the finest feast he had ever seen. There were rice and *saké*, fish and *dango*,¹ and other good things. He sighed as he looked, for he wished he could take the food home to his parents.

¹ A kind of dumpling.

"Sit and eat," said the badger who answered his thoughts as if they had been spoken. "Your father and mother shall eat the same."

The woodcutter obeyed, but when he tried to thank his little friend, he saw that the badger was gone and that, just where he had sat, there was a sparkling, tinkling waterfall. It rippled over stones and crags and sang a sweet little song, and as the woodcutter stooped to drink of it lo! the waterfall flowed with *saké*! It was the richest he had ever tasted and he filled his gourd with it and hurried home to share it with his parents.

When he arrived there and had told his story, his mother smiled and said, "Thou art a good son."

"We have fared as well," his father said, "for we found spread for us just such a feast as yours, though we knew not at all whence it came."

Next day the young man went early to his work. As he climbed the mountain he saw, to his surprise, a troop of woodcutters following him, and each carried a gourd. Some one had overheard him tell his father of the waterfall which flowed *saké*, and all the woodcutters of the village wished to taste of the wonderful drink.

When they drank, however, they were filled with rage,



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“THE WOODCUTTER STOOPED TO DRINK OF IT”

for to them the waterfall flowed only water. Then they reviled the youth and cried,

“Base one, you have beguiled us here on false pretenses! You have spoken falsely! We have toiled here for nothing! You are an evil fellow!”

But he replied calmly, “I did not ask you to come. For me the waterfall flows *saké* still, as sweet as yesterday.”

They went away in great anger, and as they went the waterfall almost seemed to laugh, so gayly did it tinkle over the stones. When the woodcutter drank, however, the laughter turned to music and a sweet voice crooned a gentle song,

“*Saké* for him who is kind,
Water for those who seek self,
Saké for him who is kind!”

Thereafter it was the same. Whenever the woodcutter, worn with toil, stooped to drink from the sparkling waterfall, or at night when he filled his gourd to bear to his father at home, the *saké* flowed free and clear and delicious. And ever the tinkling voice repeated, over and over to the music of waters falling,

“*Saké* to him who is kind.”

THE BOY AND THE SPIRITS OF THINGS

THERE was once a little boy of the Ainu who was very wise. He seldom played with the other boys, for the spirits of things were his playmates. No one could see his playmates, but he talked to them and loved them better than all the children whom he knew.

"My friends tell me strange things," he said; and his mother asked, "Who are your friends and what strange things do they tell you, my child?"

"My friends are the spirits of things," the boy made answer. "I can not tell you what they say, but the spirit of the pine tree whispers to me the things the spirit of the north wind tells to him; the tall bamboo spirit bends down as the tree sways, and talks of the sun's glowing rays; the birds and blossoms speak to me of the earth's beauty. Even the common things have spirits and they tell me many things."

The boy's mother sighed as she looked at him, for she thought he was too wise.

One day the boy fell ill. He was very sick, but no one knew what was the matter with him. He drooped from day to day and seemed not to care for anything. And it was the winter time.



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"THE BIRDS AND BLOSSOMS SPEAK TO ME"

One day his mother came to him and said, "My son, the first plum blossom is seen upon the trees. The sun is warm. Will you not go out of doors to see it?"

"The plum blossom spirit whispered me of its coming," he said. "I will go and see."

Then he crept slowly from the little thatched hut and, resting at the door, he saw the plum blossom and smelled its delicious fragrance. He smiled a little and then a queer look came into his eyes. He held his chin in the palm of his hand and sat quietly nodding his head once or twice as if saying, "Yes."

At last his mother could bear no longer to be without his thoughts. She feared to lose him, and she felt jealous of everything that came near to him. "Tell me what you think, little son," she said.

"I will tell you," the boy answered. "Oftentimes a boy and girl come to play with me. They are Spirit Children and we play many things. To-day they have told me why I am ill. It is this. My grandfather had a fine axe. With it he made many things, a tray, and a pestle to pound millet, and others. But my father threw away the axe, forgetting how well it had served. Now it lies rusting, and the spirit of the axe is angry. Because the spirit of the axe is angry, it has made me ill. So, if you do not wish me to die, you must tell my father to seek the axe and do honor to its spirit."

"It shall be as you say, my son," said his mother, and she sought his father and told him all. Then he found the axe, and polished it carefully until it shone. He made for it a new handle of ironwood, and carved it with care. And to it he set up a worship stick. This stick was tall, and its feathers curled and waved in the breeze.

Then the spirit of the axe was happy, and the boy was made well, so that joy fell upon the soul of his mother.

And when he grew to be a man, he became a great augur, for the spirits of things came often to him and told him much that was concealed from other beings. For the spirits of things were his friends.

THE DAUGHTER OF A SAMURAI

THERE was once a daughter of a Samurai who was both beautiful and good. Her name was O Cho San. Her father was dead, and she worked very hard to support her mother who was ill. The mother had trained her daughter in the best of manners, therefore O Cho San had no trouble in finding work.

There was a certain nobleman in need of a maid servant, and he approached O Cho San and asked her to serve him.

"What would my duties be?" inquired the girl as she respectfully bowed to the ground before him. "I must hear, and then I can tell if I can do them."

"They are all the common duties of a maid," he replied—"all but one thing, which is most strange. You will have the care of the porcelain plates of my fathers."

"But that is not a strange duty for a maid," answered O Cho San. She smiled at him, showing her pretty white teeth and a dimple in one cheek. "I have washed china before this, and always with care."

"Yet it is the one thing which is most hard,—to find

a maid who will attend to this," he answered. "Know, O Cho San, that the porcelain is priceless. There are twelve plates and each one is perfect. They are so old that they are of the fashion of the Owari potter who learned the secrets of Karatsu and made a flight of cranes across the blue sky.

"The porcelain is so beyond all value that my ancestor made the law that whoever broke a plate should straightway have a finger cut off. So you see the china must be washed with care."

O Cho San clasped and unclasped her slender brown fingers nervously, then she hid them quite away in the sleeves of her kimono. Her cheek paled a little, but she said bravely, "I will take the place, most honorable sir, and I shall try to keep my fingers."

Then she thought to herself, "It is not the most desirable of places to live where one loses a finger for each nick of china, but the *yen* he pays are many more than I can earn elsewhere, and my dear mother must have tea and rice. Besides, it is not likely that such costly porcelain can be often used, and when it is, I shall offer many prayers that it be used in safety."

So O Cho San served the nobleman faithfully.

It was easy to see that she was a favorite with all, for she had manners of such engaging gentleness that every one loved her. At first this pleased her. When,

however, she found that even the master's son was in love with her, she was unhappy.

She did not care at all for him, and she knew that to marry him would displease her master, who was kind to her. So she refused to listen to the young man, and this made him very angry. Being bad at heart, he resolved to be avenged upon her.

"I will ask my father to give a party at which the porcelain plates shall be used," he said to himself. "She will surely break one, and then she will turn to me to save her from her punishment. If she does not, she will lose a finger;" and on his face there was a cruel frown.

As he had said, so it was done. The master gave a supper and the priceless dishes were used. Thanks to the kindness of the gods who watch over little maidens, O Cho San washed them, dried them on the softest of paper napkins, and set them carefully away all unbroken. But alas, when the master came to look them over, the bottom one of the pile was broken.

Great was the excitement.

O Cho San wept and proclaimed her innocence.

"Honorable Master," she cried, "it is another hand than mine which has broken it. But if I am to be punished, cut a piece from my face instead of my hand. Then I may still work for my mother."



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“O CHO SAN PROCLAIMED HER INNOCENCE”

"The law of my fathers required a finger for each plate broken," said the master sorrowfully; for although he liked the gentle little maid and did not wish to hurt her, he feared to disobey the law.


"You shall not cut even her finger nail," suddenly cried a rough voice. The group around O Cho San turned in astonishment to see who dared speak so to the master.

It was Genzaburo, a servant, very rough but honest and good.

"O Cho San may not be punished for what she has not done," he said. "I myself broke the plate. You ask me why? Because I love O Cho San. She is as fair as the cherry bloom in early spring, but to me cold and remote as the snows upon the crest of the mountains. I thought to myself, she is a Samurai's daughter and will never marry me. But if she lose a finger no one else will marry her. Therefore in time she will turn to me, and I shall win her for my wife. Then I broke the plate."

"How did you break it?" demanded the master sternly.

"That I will show you," said Genzaburo. "It was very simple. I was told to mend the lid of the box in which the plate was kept. Then I thought of the plates, and I drew forth one and *bang!* my hammer fell



upon it just like this!" and he brought his hammer down with great force.

There was a crash terrible to hear, a scream from O Cho San, an exclamation of rage from the master, for the hammer had descended upon the pile of plates, and of the beautiful porcelain nothing at all remained but fragments.

In all the confusion Genzaburo alone was calm. He stood smiling at the ruin he had wrought, and his master cried, "The man is quite mad! Take him away!"

"Not so, my master, I am not mad," Genzaburo replied. "I did this thing with reason. Take all my fingers if you wish, or even my life if the commands of your honorable ancestors must be carried out. But I shall have the happiness of knowing that no more little maids can be frightened and mutilated by your cruelty."

The nobleman gazed upon him in silence; but the son threw himself before his father.

"I beg you, oh my father, forgive this mad fellow," he cried. "I too am in fault, for I persuaded you to give this entertainment in the hope that she would break a plate and then turn to me in her trouble."

Then O Cho San knelt before him and said, "Honorable Master, since I am the occasion of this great

trouble in your household, I beg you to permit me to go away and be not angry with either your son or your servant. Forgive them, and of your graciousness allow me to depart, since my only wish is to work for the welfare of my dear mother."

Then was the nobleman greatly touched. Mindful of Genzaburo's long service, he forgave him. He forgave his son, also; for since O Cho San loved him not, he needed no further punishment. Mindful still more of O Cho San's pleasant services in his household, he said, "We will speak no more of the porcelain plates of my ancestors. O Cho San will not leave me. She shall continue to live in my service and her wages shall be increased."

Then he gave her a reward, and she lived many years and earned much *yen* for the welfare of her dear mother.

THE FISHES OF THE BOILING SPRING

MANY, many years ago there lived at Atami a holy priest. Of all the poor people of the village, he was the very poorest, for he gave away nearly all that was given to him; and he was often hungry.

Atami was by the sea and the people lived on the sea's bounty. When the winter swept down from Fuji San, and the storm god roared on the waves and frightened the fish away, then all the people hungered. The fathers and mothers hungered greatly, for they gave nearly all there was to the children, who were not, therefore, so much in want. But the priest hungered most of all; for he was the father of his people, and so gave them of his own share of food. Indeed, he gave them more than this; for, under the camphor tree which grew beside his little temple on the hill, he sat and prayed for his people; and the gods heard his prayers.

One day the fish were gone from the shore and the people were very hungry. The priest of Atami sat and prayed, and lo! the camphor tree opened, and there appeared to him a lovely goddess in a mantle of purple.

Her face was fair and kind, but her eyes gleamed with displeasure, and she said, "Sit not here and pray for fish, oh foolish one! Even now the fish are upon your shore; behold them!" Then the tree closed and he saw her no more.

The priest was afraid and hastened to the shore; and there he saw a terrible sight and smelled a terrible smell.

The whole beach was covered with fishes. There were big fishes and little fishes, long fishes and fat fishes, and strange fishes that no one had ever seen before. They would have fed the village for many days, but alas! each fish was scalded as by fire and was crumbling into bits.

The good priest wept as if his heart would break, crying aloud, "Alas, my people, my people!"

Then he climbed high upon the hill above the village, and looked over the sea, hoping that he might learn what had caused the fish to die. There he prayed to the gods, "Open my eyes that I may see, and aid my people."

Far out at sea, and under the surface of the water, he beheld a great turmoil. The waters boiled and bubbled as if in torment. And through the waters, the fishes leaped, and lo! they were scalded to death.

The priest called to the watchman, who stood upon

the hill to tell the people when good fish came to the shore, "Haste! haste!" he said, "run to the temple and bring me a branch from the holy camphor tree which grows beside it. For thy life, haste!"

The watchman, being young, made great haste. Soon he brought back a bough of the tree. Its leaves were like green jade and it was of more avail than many demons.

Then the priest prayed upon the shore, while he waved his camphor branch in the air, "Oh Kwan-on, Goddess of Mercy," he said, "look upon our distress and have pity upon my people. Give us fish lest we die. And cause the turmoil in the sea to cease."

He threw the sacred bough far from him into the sea. Then there came a mighty rumbling, and the crest of the hill rose into a cone, and through it the waters burst, rising toward heaven in a stream so high that it seemed to reach the clouds.

Soon the people came with speed and made channels in the earth. The hot water flowed into the channels, and all who bathed therein were cured of their ailments; and the place was called the "Spring of Kindness."

Then was the old priest much rejoiced, for the fish came back to his people, and there was food to eat. He dwelt long in the shrine on the hilltop, and his



KWAN-ON, GODDESS OF MERCY

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people were grateful to him, and made him many offerings.

And to this day the camphor tree grows, with its small, pointed, green-jade leaves, old, and strong, and fragrant, upon the hill of Atami.

THE INAO OF THE AINU

IN the beginning of things the world was very hot. The mountains breathed fire and smoke, even the snows were melted and the sun goddess shone fiercely, with a cruel light. She scorched the food of the people, and withered their flowers and trees.

But Okikurumi, a mighty fisherman, saw the sorrows of the Ainu and grieved. He was of a kind heart, and all the people loved him. He was tall and straight as a young bamboo, of gentle mien and thoughtful, wise for the safety of the Ainu whom he loved.

When, therefore, the land was scorched with the heat, and folk were starving, Okikurumi caught many fish and sent them to the Ainu by his wife.

She was named Tureshi, and she lived but to do the will of her lord.

"Go thou to the Ainu," he said, "take this basket of fish. Put it in at the window of the chief man of the village and hasten back. I forbid the Ainu to question you or to look at you. Go!"

"Yes, my lord," Tureshi answered; and she girdled her kimono about her and started upon her errand.



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“OKI KURUMI WAS A MIGHTY FISHERMAN”

Day after day she went to the aid of the suffering people. But they saw her not, for Okikurumi had commanded them to refrain from gazing upon the face of his wife.

At last, however, one man grew curious. He wished to see this forbidden being. "She is either the most beautiful person in the world or else she is so ugly that her husband feels shame to have her seen of other men," he said to himself. "In any case I will find out."

Thus he spoke, being of an evil nature and all unmindful of the benefits of Okikurumi. When Tureshi came to the window, therefore, he lay in wait, while Kusa-Hitari¹ sang in the night. Catching Tureshi by the hand he drew her into the house, and gazed upon her lovely face. For she was the most beautiful of women, her husband's joy and pride. Then, she in great alarm fled from the Ainu to her husband's side, crying out to Okikurumi, "My lord, I have obeyed you, but send me not again to these ungrateful people who disobey your commands. Their wretched lives are not worth the saving."

Okikurumi was full of wrath and he declared that, henceforth and forever, the men of the Ainu should find food for their own women, since Tureshi could not go to them without insult.

¹ Cricket.

Then were the men of the Ainu very sad, and many of them died and their chief men mourned.

So they took an *inao*¹ and set it up upon the sea shore. Its staff was straight and slender, and its curls and tassels floated free in the gentle breeze. By this they meant to worship the spirit of the sea and implore him to bring them good fortune.

Then the sea spirit, who loved not Okikurumi, was pleased with the *inao* and sent them many fish.

But again there came a famine to the land of the Ainu, and it was worse than any that had gone before. The children hungered, and the mothers wept, and the old men set up an *inao*; but all was of no avail. At last they sought a wise man, and he gave them good counsel, saying, "Gather together all the crumbs which are left in the village, millet and rice malt, and make a little cup of wine." This they did.

"Pour it into six cups of lacquer," he said, and this they did. And the scent of the *saké* rose upward, even unto heaven, and it was good.

The gods hastened from far and near to see whence came the delicious smell. They drank of the *saké* and it was very good. Then they danced and sang and laughed in glee. And as they danced, one goddess pulled out two hairs from a deer and cast them far

¹ Prayer-plume.

away, and lo! from the mountains came two herds of deer. Then another goddess plucked two scales from a fish and threw them far into the river, and behold, shoals of fish swam from the sea.

Then were the Ainu much rejoiced, and men went proudly forth upon the mountains to hunt the deer; and others sought the river and caught many fish. And from that day there was always fish and flesh in the land of the Ainu, and there was no more famine.

THE GOBLIN TREE

A SAMURAI dwelt in the Oni province and his name was Satsuma Shichizaemon. He had a garden, the most beautiful of any in the village. It was filled with flowering plants, and the shrubs had a delicious fragrance which filled the air. Golden-hearted lilies floated upon the tiny lake, dwarf pines waved their branches over the water's edge, and above all, dark and silent, towered a huge *enoki*, or goblin tree.

This tree had stood there for centuries, and no one had dared to cut a branch or even to pull one of its leaves.

Shichizaemon, however, was of a bad heart, and had no reverence for the things of his fathers. He wished the view from his window not to be hidden, and the *enoki* stood between him and the valley. So he gave orders to have the tree cut down.

That night his mother dreamed a dream. She saw before her a terrible dragon-like monster whose forked tongue spit fire, and who said to her, "Mother of Satsuma Shichizaemon, beware! Your son shall die and all his house if he harm the *enoki*, for the



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“ THE DWELLING WAS LEFT DESERTED ”

spirits of the trees will not suffer insult to the goblin tree."

Next day she told her son of her dream, but he only laughed at her, and said, "If all the spirits of the earth and air and water were to come to you in dreams, still I should make way with this tree." Then he sent a woodman to cut down the tree.

As the tall tree fell with a crash so loud as to frighten all the household, Satsuma also fell to the ground.

"I am ill!" he cried. "The tree! The tree!" and he knew no more; for he was dead. Soon too his wife fell ill, and then his mother. Within a month there remained not one of all his people. Even the servants disappeared from earth, all crying as their spirits departed, "A-a-e-e-i! The tree! The tree!"


Long the dwelling was left deserted. Stagnant waterweeds fouled the lake, and even the songs of the birds seemed mournful and sad. At last it was remembered that there remained of the family of Satsuma but one person, a nun named Tikem, who dwelt in the temple at Yamashira. They sent to her saying, "O Tikem San, will you not come to the garden of your kinsman, and remove the terrible curse which rests upon it?"

"I will come," she answered.

She came to the dwelling of Satsuma Shichizaemon,

her kinsman, and all the people in the village watched in fear, lest the sickness of the goblin tree should come upon her. But O Tikem San feared not.

She abode in the house calmly attending to her duties, and she was well. Every day she went to the place where had stood the goblin tree, and there she offered up prayers for the kinsman who had perished. And there was no more curse, for the holiness of O Tikem San rested upon the place like a gentle breath from heaven. And all the children of the village played happily in the sunlit garden where once had been the goblin tree.



THE MAN WHO BECAME A SERPENT

THERE was once a hunter who shot a great bear, and the beast ran from him and entered a cave.

“I will go after it,” the hunter said to himself, “for, since it is wounded, it will be easy to kill it when it is trapped in the cave.”

So he went into the cave, but could find no bear. He saw its tracks, and they led down a dark passage which seemed to slope into the earth. He followed this passage a long way, but found no bear. Suddenly he came into an open space and saw before him a beautiful garden. It was filled with wonderful trees such as he had never before seen, and some of them bore strange fruits.

Now as there was no one to forbid, he plucked some berries and found that they were good. But suddenly he was overcome with a strange feeling, and gazing down upon himself, he saw that he was turned into a horrible serpent. Struck with terror, he cried, “What fearful thing has befallen me? I who was a man, ruler over all animals, even the four-footed kings of the forest, am become the lowest of the low, even a



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“HE STOOD BESIDE THE BODY OF A HUGE SERPENT”

loathsome serpent." He hung his head in shame, and crawled back through the cave, and lay down at the foot of a huge pine tree.

Wearied and distressed, at last he fell asleep and dreamed a dream. In his dream a woman appeared to him, who looked kindly upon him and said, "I feel sorrow for you, unhappy youth. I am the spirit of the pine tree, and you may hear me speak when the wind sweeps from Fuji San and whispers through my pines. This thing has happened to you because you ate the fruit of Fengtu,¹ of which no man may eat in safety. But you can be saved if you will obey me. Climb to the very topmost branches of this pine and hurl yourself down to earth. So you may return to your true self."

The hunter awoke and, remembering his dream, said, "It would be better to be dashed to pieces than to remain alive and be a loathsome serpent. I will throw myself down from the tree and may the gods help me."

Gliding carefully up to the very topmost branch, he poised for a moment, and then gave a mighty leap. He fell to the ground and for a long time he knew no more.

When he returned to himself, he stood at the foot

¹ Hades.

of the great pine tree beside the crushed body of a huge serpent, and his own form was once more the form of a man. Then was his heart full of a great thanksgiving, and he straightway set up *inao* beneath the kindly pine tree.

THE LAUGHING DUMPLING

THERE was once an old woman who laughed at everything. She was a very old woman, but she seemed young. That was because she laughed so much, for the god of laughter made all the lines in her face pleasant lines.

She laughed at rain, she laughed at drought, she laughed at poverty. She had never had a chance to laugh at wealth, for she was very, very poor. She made rice dumplings to sell, and so she was called by the people about her the "Laughing Dumpling." Her name was really Sanja.

Sanja had but one wish. She never prayed to Juro-Jin¹ for good fortune, or to any of the gods for wealth; but she wished above all things to make the finest rice dumplings in all the city. She tried and tried, and each time she made them better than the last; but she never made them quite perfect, and so she was never quite satisfied. She never had quite all the rice she wanted to work with; for she was so poor

¹ God of Good Fortune.

that each grain seemed to her as dear as a piece of money to a miser.

But still she tried and still she laughed. One day she sat in her kitchen making her dumplings with her usual care. Her little house stood at the top of a hill, quite outside of the city, and as she worked and patted with her paddle, one of the finest of her dumplings, it slipped and rolled right out of the door and down the hill.

"Dear, dear!" she cried, "that will never, never do! I can't afford to lose that dumpling. Perhaps I can catch it."

So she sprang up and ran after it as fast as her feet would carry her. But the dumpling had a good start, and she could not catch it. She saw it ahead of her, and suddenly it bounced down a hole in the ground. She ran after it, and before she knew it, her *geta*¹ slipped into the hole and she dropped through.

"A-a-a-i!" she cried, "where am I going?"

She did not stop falling until her breath was almost gone. Then suddenly she found herself in a place she had never seen before. The trees and flowers looked strange, and she felt a little frightened and very much alone. But as she looked about her her heart grew lighter, for she saw a statue of Jizu and him she well

¹ Wooden sandal.

knew. So she bowed to him, and said, "Good morning, my Lord Jizu. Have you seen a rice dumpling fall this way?"

"Good morning," answered Jizu, with his very sweet smile. "Yes, I saw a dumpling and it went past here, down the hill, skipping as if it had legs."

"Oh, thank you very much, then I must skip after it," said Sanja.

"Not so," answered Jizu, "do not go down there. An *Oni*¹ lives there, and he may do you harm."

"But I must have my dumpling," laughed the old woman; and she ran on in the direction the dumpling had taken. She had gone only a little way when she came to another statue of Jizu. Being a good woman as well as polite, she bowed to it very reverently, and said, "My good Lord Jizu, have you seen a dumpling pass this way?"

"As if it had wings, it flew past me," said Jizu, smiling upon her most sweetly.

"Then I must hurry to catch it," said the old woman.

But Jizu shook his head, "You must not think of that," he said, "there is an Oni below there who is most wicked. He does not like old women at all, and he will surely be cruel to you if he does not eat you."

¹ A Japanese ogre.

"But I must have my dumpling," said Sanja. "He'll not eat me. I'm too tough. Tee-hee-hee!" and she ran laughing on her way.

As she went along she thought she smelled her dumpling, and, as she was very hungry, it smelled very good.

"If I ever catch that dumpling I will certainly eat every bit of it," she said to herself. "I will punish it for giving me such a chase. Tee-hee-hee!" Then she felt a shadow across her face. She looked up and saw another statue of Jizu.

"Most gracious Lord Jizu," she said, smiling up into his ever smiling face, "have you seen my dumpling pass this way?"

"Yes, it passed but a moment ago," he answered, "but do not think of searching for it, for the Oni who lives beyond is very fierce and cruel, and he will certainly eat you. He is fond of dumplings, but he is much fonder of human meat."

"One who is as old as I am hasn't any very fresh meat on her bones, tee-hee-hee!" laughed Sanja. But as she spoke, she heard a terrible noise and her face turned pale.

"Get behind me quickly," said Jizu, "here comes the Oni. Perhaps you may escape him if you hide behind me."

O Sanja San crept quickly behind him. She found herself not so brave as she had thought, and she did not feel at all like laughing. She hid herself very carefully behind Jizu, and up came the Oni, very wild and fierce.

"Good morning, Lord Jizu," he said, "I smell meat!"

Even for the Oni, Jizu's smile was the same, and he made answer, "Good morning, Oni. Is it not dumpling that you smell? I saw one pass this way not long ago."

"No, indeed," said the Oni, "it is not dumpling. I know one passed this way, for I saw it. What I smell now is human meat!" and he sniffed and sniffed until Sanja shivered. But for all her fear, she wanted very much to laugh.

"I don't smell it," said Jizu, still smiling. "Are you sure it is not rice dumpling? It seems to me that I smell a little of it about you."

"That is not strange," said the Oni with a grin; "for when I saw that juicy dumpling rolling my way I caught it and ate it. It was good. I wish I had the person who made it!"

O Sanja San was as angry as she could be at the thought of his eating her dumpling. She was frightened, too, and she cowered closer in the shadow of the Lord Jizu.

"What I smell now is meat, fresh human meat, juicy, young and tender!" and the Oni sniffed again and smacked his lips very impolitely.

This was too much for Sanja. She could not help thinking of her wrinkled, withered flesh, and how far from juicy, young and tender it was. She laughed out loud, "Tee-hee-hee. Tee-hee-hee!"

The Oni's ears were as good as his nose, and without a word he stretched out a long, hairy arm behind Jizu, and pulled her forth from her hiding place. She was frightened terribly, but still she laughed.

"Who are you?" demanded the Oni.

"I am the woman who made the dumpling," she answered. "Why did you eat it?"

"Because it was good," said the Oni.

"You couldn't eat me for that reason," said Sanja.

"I don't intend to eat you," said the Oni. "You will come home with me and cook. You needn't be afraid. As long as you cook good dumplings for me nothing will harm you."

"Very well," said Sanja politely, for there was really nothing else to say.

The Oni put her in a boat and rowed away across a river to his castle. There she cooked for him such dishes as he had never before tasted, and they were good.

But when she came to make rice dumplings, the Oni said to her, "You are a good cook, but you are wasteful. When you cook rice put but one grain into the pot."

"One grain!" she cried. "Tee-hee-hee! how could any one live on one grain of rice?"

"I will show you," said the Oni. "For though you are a woman and think you know much, there are some things which I know better than you."

Sanja was silent; but she tossed her head a little, and said to herself, "How impolite he is! And how vain to think he could possibly know more than I do!"

"Be sure you have your water boiling," said the Oni. "Put one grain of rice in the pot, then take this paddle in your hand and if you want rice for ten persons stir ten times, in this way;" and he stirred the paddle about in the water. "See!" and lo! the grain of rice burst into ten pieces, and each piece into ten more, and each a perfect grain, until the pot was filled.

Sanja fairly gasped with astonishment.

"This is a magic paddle," said the Oni; "and with it you can cook every thing, serve every one, and always have enough."

So Sanja stayed with the Oni and cooked for him, and she gave perfect satisfaction. The dumplings she



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“SHE GAVE PERFECT SATISFACTION”

made were always perfect, and the rice pot was never empty, because of the magic paddle.

All went very well until one day Sanja grew homesick. She felt as if she could not stay with the Oni another day, and as if she would die if she could not go home. She thought and thought about it; and the little hut with its paper walls, and the cherry tree beside it seemed fairer than all the fine castles of Oni Land. So, one day when the Oni had gone off for a day's hunting, she decided to try to escape. She stole out of the castle and down to the river's bank; and there she found the boat in which the Oni had brought her. Quickly she got into it and began to row. She had reached the middle of the river, when she heard a loud cry from the shore. There was the Oni with all his friends, waving their hands wildly and calling loudly to her, "Come back, Laughing Dumpling, come back!"

She was afraid to go on and still more afraid to go back. She began to row harder than ever when she saw what the Oni was doing. He and all his friends stooped down and, making cups of their hands, they began to drink the water of the river. They drank and drank, and soon there was so little water left to float the boat that they could wade to her across the river bed. She was so frightened that she could hardly

think. As they came nearer, however, she thought how funny they looked, wading out from the reedy shore, and she laughed, "Tee-hee-hee!"

The Oni stopped and looked at her, "How strange that she laughs at everything!" said one.

She laughed again, "Tee-hee-hee!"

"She shall not laugh at me!" cried her master; and he started fiercely toward her.

The Laughing Dumpling was not going to be caught if she could help it, for she felt that this was now no laughing matter. Wondering what she could do to get away, she thought of the magic paddle which was tucked in her belt, where she had always carried it. She drew it forth, and reaching over the side of the boat she quickly stirred the waters. Then, lo! they began to flow again. They flowed so fast that they washed the boat right into the shore. They filled the river so quickly that the Oni had to swim for their lives.

Sanja ran quickly away, as fast as she could go, past the three statues of Jizu, up the hill and, with difficulty, up through the very hole into which she had fallen.

When she reached home she sat down quite exhausted; but as soon as she could get her breath she laughed until she cried.

"I ought not to have taken away the Oni's paddle," she said; "but he ate my dumpling, and made me cook all these months without any pay. Now I shall be able to make fine dumplings for all Kyoto. Tee-hee-hee!"

And so she did. For the magic paddle kept her always supplied with rice, and everybody came to eat of the wonderful rice cakes and to see the Laughing Dumpling.

THE SACRIFICE TO KOMPIRA

YAMATO and his army came one day to Lagami, and then crossing the mountain, they soon arrived at the Bay of Yedo.

"It will be easy to cross here," cried the prince to his men. "The distance is small from one shore to the other. There is no water here to fear. We can soon conquer this obstacle."

Kompira, god of the sea, heard the prince's boast and was angry.

"I will show this proud fellow that he can not despise the least of my children," he said wrathfully.

Then he blew upon the waves, and they lashed themselves into foam. They rose toward high heaven, and dashed against the ships of Yamato Take until they were beaten upon the rocks and nearly overwhelmed. There arose, also, a fearful storm; the lightnings flashed about the ships, and the thunder roared, and all were sore afraid.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Kompira, "I wonder if these mortals now see my power! They may well fear me, Kompira, the god of the sea!"

Yamato Take was sad. He gazed in the face of ruin.

"Behold," he sighed. "This is the end of all my struggles. My ships will be dashed to pieces upon the rocks. We shall all perish in the sea or be taken prisoners by the enemy. The wrath of Kompira, great god of the sea, is turned against me, for I have offended him. There is no more hope."

Then he laid his hand upon his second ¹ sword; but his wife stayed his hand.

"Not so, my lord," she cried, raising her beautiful pale face toward his. She loved him and was always with him, in peace or war.

She was very lovely, the Princess Ota Tachabana; and Yamato Take listened when she spoke.

"Not so, my dear lord," she spoke again. "Victory shall be yours. We have but to appease the wrath of Kompira and all will be well. I, myself, will be the sacrifice needed for your dear safety."

With that she raised both her hands to the sea and prayed, "O Kompira, great god of the sea, be not angry with my lord, for he is good. Send him a fortunate issue, and accept my sacrifice."

Thus crying, she stood poised for a moment upon the prow of the ship, and then sprang into the sea.

¹ Every Samurai carried two swords, a long one to slay his enemies, a short one to kill himself if about to be taken prisoner.



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"SHE SPRANG INTO THE SEA"

Yamato gave a terrible cry and would have followed her, but his chief men laid hands upon him and would not let him go.

The wind sank to quietness, the waves grew calm, the storm ceased, and his headman cried, "My lord, the sacrifice is accepted. We may now pass quickly in safety. Because she would wish it, rouse yourself to strife and conquest."

When morning broke, the ships were safely moored by the farther shore. As Yamato stepped out upon the sand, the lapping waves cast at his feet the comb of the princess, his wife. He picked it up and commanded that at that spot a temple should be raised to her memory.

Then he made a great conquest for his lord the emperor, and his soldiers boasted of him and said, "He is the greatest warrior in the world, the Prince Yamato Take!"

But he was no longer proud. Instead, when men praised him, and honors were showered upon him, he bent his head and said only, "Azuma! azuma! wa ya!"¹

¹ "My wife, alas, my wife!"

THE TWO BROTHERS

THERE were once two brothers who were as different as day and night. The oldest, Kurobei, cared only for himself and thought of nothing but of what might advance his own interests. Moreover, he was very proud and haughty. The younger brother's name was Kazuma. He was gentle and of a kind heart, and all the people loved him.

When therefore the father died, and the two brothers were left alone in the world (their mother having been dead for many years), there were those among the servants who said, "It is a pity that O Kazuma is not the elder, to rule the house; for his rule would be one of kindness."

Both Kurobei and Kazuma loved their father and had been dutiful sons. Bóth had obeyed the old man and both had grieved at his death. They had him buried with every token of respect and they wept at his loss.

"My father is no more," cried Kurobei. "I must place offerings upon his grave that all men may see that I hold him in respectful remembrance."

But the younger brother wept most bitterly. "Alas! alas!" he cried. "My father is gone from me! No longer may we go to him each day and ask his advice upon the many things which trouble us! How shall we live? Let us each day place upon his grave flowers of remembrance. Perhaps his spirit may some day speak with us."

Kurobei agreed to this and each morning the two brothers could be seen bearing flowers to their father's grave, and there they talked to their father, telling him of all the doings of their lives.

And all the people saw and said, "How good Kurobei is! Though he has much to do, in the affairs of his home, still each day he takes his brother with him and goes to his father's grave, lest the younger forget his filial piety."

Thus things went on for twelve months, and the matter coming to the emperor's ears, he appointed Kurobei to a high place in his household, saying, "One who so well serves his father will be faithful in office." And Kazuma was much pleased at the honor shown to his brother, whom he dearly loved.

Kurobei went much to the palace and much enjoyed his new life. He said to Kazuma, "You will see now that you must go alone to my father's grave, good brother, for I am much occupied with affairs. For the

honor of the family I must appear well at court, and my father would wish it. I have gone to his grave daily these twelve months and never omitted this respect; but now my duty to the emperor demands that the rest of my time be spent at the palace. Go you therefore to the grave, if you will, since you have no higher duty."

"But my brother!" cried Kazuma in astonishment. "Will you neglect our father's grave altogether?"

"Not at all," replied the elder brother. "Be not so hasty in your judgments, for that is a sin. I shall place before his grave the day lily which shall bloom daily, and thus shall I continue to do him honor. I have chosen a handsome plant, and shall pay a gardener well to tend it for me. The flowers shall stand in my stead before the grave, and I shall have leisure to attend to my duties at the palace, coming to visit my father only upon the days of special fête."

"Alas, my brother," cried Kazuma. "Plant not the lily of forgetfulness!"

Kurobei only said, "Trouble me no further, I have spoken."

Then Kazuma spoke no more, but he went even more carefully each day to his father's grave and there he made offerings. He talked to the spirit of his beloved father, and told him all things which occurred to him each day.

The elder brother at first went upon the feast days, but as time passed he went less and less, and at last he went not even upon the Feast of the Dead, when every one should remember their dead with incense and a bower of bamboo and bright berries.

This made Kazuma very sad, and at last he spoke.

"O Kurobei," he said, "honorable brother, have you quite forgotten our father? You never visit his grave."

Kurobei was angry and spoke harshly. "Why do you bother me, troublesome fellow? Did I not tell you I had no time to attend to it? I planted the lily, and I pay the gardener to attend to it; I can not do more for my duty lies elsewhere. Does not the lily fare well?"

"It fares well, my brother," said Kazuma sadly; and to himself he whispered, "the ~~My~~ lily of forgetfulness."

Then after his brother had gone to the palace he wept much and said, "My brother's heart has grown like a stone. He has forgotten my father and all that he has for him is the lily of forgetfulness. I too shall plant a flower, but mine shall be the aster for memory; for I shall never, never, forget my honorable father. Each day I will tend the aster with my own hands; for it is a sacred flower, the flower of remembrance."

Then he did as he said, and every day he tended the plants and prayed beside his father's grave. And every day he loved his father more and more.



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“EVERY DAY HE TENDED THE PLANTS”

One day when he was tending the flower he heard a strange sound. He listened and there seemed to come from the grave a whispering voice. It said to him, "O Kazuma, I am sent to guard the spirit of your honorable father. Long have you remembered your parent when your brother had forgotten him. You have planted for him the sacred asters of remembrance, and here they have bloomed in purple beauty. All these things I have noticed and I am well pleased with your filial piety. So, fear me not, faithful son. To you I shall be a spirit of kindness so long as you live. I can read the future, and ever I shall whisper to you in dreams of the night, and I shall direct you in the paths which you should follow to meet success. Farewell!"

The voice ceased and Kazuma stood amazed before the asters and the day lilies of his brother. He returned home greatly wondering, and told his wife all that had happened.

That night, in sleep, the spirit came to him and told him all that he should do to meet success; and when day came he obeyed the voice, and all was well with him. And so it continued, for success waited upon him at every turn, and his wife bore him many sons and all his life he was happy and fortunate.

THE PRINCESS AND THE FOX BABY

A LITTLE princess sat beneath the cherry blooms in the royal garden. It was spring and the whole garden was a mass of radiant pink bloom, as soft as the sunset glow on the snows of Fuji San.

The little princess was as fair as the cherry blooms, and the petals had drifted lovingly upon her. They had powdered the ground about her like snowflakes, and rested upon her soft black hair like a coronet of pearl.

As she sat and dreamed in the sunshine, the little princess was very happy, and she said to herself, "What a beautiful world this is! I wish every one was as happy as I am!" This she said because her heart was as kind as her face was fair.

Then she heard a sudden rush and the patter of tiny feet, and a little baby fox sprang over the garden wall and ran right under the princess's robe. She stooped and took it in her arms.

"Poor little frightened foxling," she said. "What is the matter?"

But the little fox only tucked his sharp nose under her arm and trembled all over.

Then the princess heard a shout and looking up, she saw some boys on the wall.

"That is our fox," they cried roughly, for they did not know she was a princess. "Give it to us!"

"What are you going to do with it?" she asked.

"Kill it and eat the flesh for supper," cried the biggest boy. "Then we will sell the skin, and the liver can be sold to the magician doctor who cures fever with it. We shall get many *bu*¹ for the fox, and we can buy rice cakes and other things."

The little fox seemed to understand, for he cowered closer to the princess. He poked his nose into the palm of her hand and kissed it gently.

"You may have the price of the foxling, but you may not have his life, poor baby," said the little princess. "Here," she pulled her purse from her kimono sleeve—"here is a gold piece for the flesh, and one for the liver, one for the fur, and still another for the life of this poor little bundle of fur. And pray the gods to give you kinder hearts in your breasts, for neither the gods nor men like cruel souls."

The boys quickly took the gold which she offered them, lest she should change her mind and take back the coins, but she had no thought of doing that. Gold was nothing to her, because of it she had

¹ A Japanese coin.

plenty; but the life of the fox baby seemed very precious.

"Fox Baby," she said as she untied a string from his neck. "Where are your father and mother?" The fox gave a sad little whine, and its eyes seemed full of tears. From a bamboo thicket nearby came some short, sharp barks. The fox baby barked in return, and the princess saw peering from between the bamboo branches two old foxes who looked anxiously at the baby.

"Really I believe these are your parents, foxling," she said. "I shall let you go to them. I would like to keep you for my playmate, you are so soft and pretty; but you would be lonely, no matter how much I loved you, and I never could be as your father and mother. So run along and be happy."

She stroked him gently and set him down, and with great leaps he was off to the bamboo thicket. Then the princess watched with pleasure, for the old foxes received him with joy; they licked him over and over, and then, one on either side the baby fox, they trotted happily away. The princess smiled 'neath the cherry blooms and was glad.

Summer bloomed and the lotus lay golden hearted on the waters' brim. It passed and the maples were scarlet and gold upon the hillsides. The sun was a

glory of burnished gold in the heavens, but within the palace all was dark.

The little princess walked no more in the garden. She lay parched with fever upon her slumber mat and her mother and father watched beside her day and night. All the wise doctors in the land had been called to her side.

"She can not live," they said, "since sleep does not visit her eyelids." They tried by every means to make her sleep, but though her eyelids were heavy and she longed for slumber, it came not, and every day she grew weaker.

At last came the emperor's magician and he gazed upon her long and carefully. At last he said, "She is cast under a spell. Unless the spell is broken she must die. One must sit beside her from the going down of the sun until it rises again in golden splendor from behind the mountains. That one will break the charm."

"That is easy," cried the princess's maids. "We will watch to-night and save her;" for the little princess was so sweet and good that every one loved her. But lo! when the midnight came, the maidens felt a strange charm steal over them, and a strange scent was wafted to them, and strange music filled their ears, and they slept.

When morning came they wept and felt very sad;

for the princess was weaker and they had not broken the charm.

The princess's old nurse was very angry.

"Foolish ones," she cried. "You have idled and slept and my darling is not yet well. I will watch to-night, for she grows weaker each day."

But alas! the old nurse was no more fortunate than the maidens, for the spell was woven about her also and she slept; and when she awoke, she, too, wept bitterly.

Then all manner of people tried to withstand the charm and watch with the sick maiden, and even the little princess's father and mother, but to no avail. And daily she grew weaker and weaker.

At last there came to the palace a young warrior, Ito San, who begged to be allowed to watch one night.

"I love the princess," he said. "Rather than sleep I shall die." Then he took his sword, keen and sharp, and placing the point beneath his chin, rested the handle upon the floor. Each time his head drooped in sleep, the point would bite and sting, and, struggling with the drowsiness which overtook him, he would sit upright again. In this way he conquered sleep.

When the princess opened her eyes she seemed less weak, and Ito gazed upon her with love in his eyes. Then sleepily, she smiled upon him, and at last she slept.

He sat beside her until morning not daring to move.

As the sunrise swept over the land, turning all to glowing beauty, he heard a strange, weird chant; and the words of it were stranger still, for the voice sang,

“Serve to the little princess
Broth of the finest rice;
Grate into it fox’s liver
For magical, healing spice.
For a wildwood fox, search far and near,
And the princess’s ills will disappear.”

“A fox’s liver,” cried the young warrior joyously. “My beloved, now shall you be saved!” He repeated the song of the sunrise to the mother of the princess and she told the emperor. Then he sent far and wide to all the great hunters of the hills.

“Bring us the liver of a fox,” he commanded, “a clean and healthy fox. Do this as quickly as possible, for my daughter is sick unto death.”

The hunters sought on every hill and in every valley, through every tangled wildwood and over every moor, but they found no fox.

“There are no foxes!” they cried to the emperor. “We have searched far and near, and not one is to be found.”



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"HE SAT BESIDE HER, NOT DARING TO MOVE"

Then the young warrior said, "I will find one. There must be a fox somewhere in the wildwood for this gentle little heart who loved all animals."

Then Ito San hunted far and wide, but he found no foxes; for the cunning animals had heard the proclamation of the emperor and had hidden themselves. So Ito San returned to the palace with grief in his heart, ready to slay himself in his despair.

At that moment he felt a hand touch his sleeve, and turning quickly he saw a little old woman, with a queer little pointed face, and a mantle of red fur wrapped about her. In her hand she bore a jar, and she said, "Take this quickly and the princess will be well."

"What is the price?" he asked.

"Alas!" she burst into tears. "The price is more than you could ever pay, but the princess paid it long ago. Hasten to her!"

Then Ito saw that the jar contained fox's liver and his heart bounded for joy. He hurried to the palace. the words of the song in his ears.

"Serve to the little princess
 Broth of the finest rice;
 Grate into it fox's liver
 For magical, healing spice.
 For a wildwood fox, search far and near,
 And the princess's ills will disappear."

They gave her the broth of rice with the liver grated into it, and lo! she was well. And as she lay dreaming happily of Ito San and his great love for her, there came to her in her dream, a fox cub who said, "Dear Princess, I am that little fox you saved long ago from the cruel boys. My father and mother were not ungrateful. So my father gave you his liver to make you well, and my mother, who would not live without him, sends her red fur to keep you warm. And this is because you were kind to the little foxling who was their baby."

Then the princess awoke, and upon the sleeping mat there lay, soft and warm and light, the skin of a red fox.

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